

# AN EXPOSITION

By way of Supplement,

ON THE

Fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and  
ninth Chapters of the Prophecy

OF

# AMOS.

Where you have the Text fully explained, other  
Texts occasionally cleared, many Cases Stated, ma-  
ny Practical Observations raised, and many Polemical  
Points debated: Together

With a Con-  
futation of } Dr. *Homes*,  
                  } and  
                  } Sir *Henry Vane*, } In the end of the Commentary.

By *THO. HALL*, B. D. and Pastor of *Kings-norton*.

*O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men, that I might  
leave my people, and go from them, for they be all Adulterers, an assembly of  
treacherous men. Jer. 9. 2.*

*They bend their tongue like their bow for lyes, but they are not valiant for the truth  
upon the earth, for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not mee, saith  
the Lord. Verse 3. J. Hall died April 13. 1665*

LONDON, Printed for *Henry Mortlock*, at the Phoenix in St.  
*Pauls Church-yard* near the Little North-door. 1661.



Thomas, third B. D. was born at Worcester  
lived and died in the faith once delivered to the  
saints; his salary at Abingdon being small  
he kept a school, but as he pursued his labours  
he could not be prevailed on to leave it, though solici-  
ted with a promise of great preferment. During  
his civil wars he was often accused, threatened,  
with death, plundered and five times imprisoned,  
and when his property <sup>gone</sup> was he lived by faith; in  
his last illness his stock was reduced to six pence;  
but he was easy, and said it was enough; and  
so it proved, with providential additions; for be-  
fore it was gone several sealed papers of money  
were sent him by unknown friends; when he was  
near his end, he thus expressed himself: "I am now  
going where I shall have rest, freedom from  
all fear, weariness and watching, and all the woes  
of this world; even so come Lord Jesus, for I long  
for thy coming; and when the pains of death  
were upon him, he said, All the joys of this life are  
nothing, nothing, to the joy I have in Jesus Christ,



*Ornatissimo Viro, amico amicissimo, Ec-  
clesiæ Pastorumq; fidelium Patrono notissimo,  
Orthodoxæ fidei propugnatori acerrimo,*

*Gervasio Piggot de Thrumpton in Comitatu  
Nottingham. Armigero:*

**T**Am à Romanistarum fæce ac Scabiæ; quàm  
à Fanaticorum Spuma ac rabie, liberrimo:

Qui Natales eruditione, Eruditionem virtute, Virtu-  
tem moribus usque quâque nobilibus adornavit:

Cui medulla inest & Quintessentia Pietatis, Poësi-  
Philosophiæ ac Theologiæ:

Lucubrationes hæc quales, quales, Amoris & Ho-  
noris ergô. D. D. D.

**THO. HALL:**

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TO THE  
READER.

**I**N my Exposition on Hosea, I had occasion to consult the Prophet Amos, who was Hosea's Contemporary; and finding that Dr. Benefield, Lady-Margaret-Professor in Oxford, had commented on that Prophecy; upon perusal I found that hee had expounded onely the three first Chapters; whereupon, I finding the fourth to be very suitable to our times, I onely set upon that, not intending to go any further; for the clouds thickned so fast over us, that I despaired of proceeding to another Chapter; but being incouraged by some to go on with so useful a work begun, I made a further Essay, and by a good hand of providence, have brought the work (totally beyond my own expectation) to a total perfection, having finisht the Exposition of the whole Prophecy.

Many Posthumous works have had Supplementators surpassing their Predecessors, this cannot be expected here. All that I can promise thee is this, that I have not baukt any doubt or diffi-

## The Epistle to the Reader.

*scality, but have as fully and faithfully explained the Text as possibly I could; I have spared for no cost or pains, I have spent both Purse and Person freely in the work. 'Tis for the Lord, and I have not offered to him of that which cost mee nothing.*

*I have studied brevity, the times will not bear long discourses, besides I naturally affect brevity, and love to see much matter compact together in a little room.*

*Here thou hast Practicals, Polemicals, References, and what ever else might compleat the work.*

*Here wee have a Glasse wherein wee may see the Misery of Security, the Downfall of Sensuality and Idolatry, the Sword, Plague and Famine pursuing an obstinate and incurable people to destruction. Here wee have the sins that ruined Israel, viz. Oppression and Cruelty, Amos 2. 8. and 8. 6, 7. Bribery, Amos 4. 1 and 5. 12. Notorious Lust, Amos 2. 7. Odious Ingratitude, Amos 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. Wilful Ignorance, Amos 3. 10. Hating of Reproof, Amos 5. 10, 13. Formality, and a Ceremonious Religion, Amos 5. 21, 22. Unrighteousness in dealing, Amos 8. 5. And Weariness of Gods worship, Amos 8. 3. And if these be Englands sins, these will be likewise Englands ruine. Parity of sin will bring parity in suffering. All the Symptomes of Judgements approaching are*  
upon

## The Epistle to the Reader.

upon the Land. 1 Good men fall, Psa. 12. 1. Isa. 57. 1. 2 Ill men rise, 2 Chron. 19. 2. Psal. 12. ult. 3 Gods Vine, the Church, is grown wilde and luxuriant for want of pruning; Professors are turned Blasphemers, and instead of the Grapes of Obedience, they bring forth the wilde Grapes of Apostacy, Idolatry, Security, Pride and Hypocrisie. Wee grow weary of Mannah, and long to be at our Garlick and Leeks, and Onions in Egypt again. It was the great sin of Israel, that when the Lord had brought them out of Egyptian bondage into Canaan, yet then they cryed, Come let us make us a Captain, that so wee may return into Egypt again, Numb. 14. 4. Such horrid Apostacy alwaies ends in misery, Isa. 1. 4, 7. Ezek. 9. 9. Heb. 10. 38. Besides, the sad divisions and subdivisions which are amongst us fore-tell some approaching Judgement. Wee cannot gratifie Antichrist more, than to weaken our selves by our divisions. England is like a great Animal (as the Duke of Rohan hath well observed) and cannot dye unless she help to kill her self. Like a Diamond, she is not so easily broken with hammers and swords, as she is cut in peeces with her own dust. 'Twas our divisions at first that brought in the Romans, Normans, and Saxons into this Land; what they may do again, a little time will shew.

Many

## The Epistle to the Reader.

— Many amongst us have run round to Popery, and therefore 'tis just with God to make that the scourge, which so many have made their refuge; and after the Rod hath done its work, then hee'l burn it; God is letting Antichrist loose once more, to hasten his fall; the more blood he sheds, the greater will the cry be against him. The measure of Babylons sins will be made up in blood before her final ruine; and when she shall have once more filled her self with the blood of the Saints, she shall have blood given her to drink, for she is worthy.

The good Lord awaken us, and humble us all for our own sins, and for the sins of the times we live in, and make us to mourn for the things wee cannot mend, and inable us to receive the Truth in the love of it, and make us at last to serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things, that wee may not provoke him to make us serve our enemies in want and misery. This is, and shall bee the prayer of

Kingfn. July 25.  
1661.

Thy Servant in the  
Lord,

*Kingston*  
*Worcestershire*  
*Per here*

THEO. HALL.

AN





# Israels Obstinacy. A COMMENTARY ON

The fourth Chapter of *Amos*.

## AMOS 4. 1.

*Hear this word yee Kine of Bashan, that are in the mountains of Samaria, which oppress the poor, which crush [ or destroy ] the needy, which say to their Masters, bring and let us drink.*



His Chapter contains the summe of the *Third Sermon* which the Prophet *Amos* made to *Israel*, wherein he exhorts them to Repentance; and because by nature we are very averse and backward to this duty,

1 He sets before them their hainous and hideous Sins, which for number and nature were very great and grievous.

2 He rehearseth the Judgements which they had already endured, and tells them of greater Judgements which would follow, unless by speedy repentance they did prevent them.

3 He sets before them the *Goodness*, and the *Greatness* of God, the better to draw and drive them home unto him.

1 He sets before them his *Goodness*, viz. he was their God in Covenant still, ready to receive them to mercy upon their returning to him.

2 His *Greatness* (*vers. 13.*) he forms the Mountains, and  
B creates

creates the Winds, &c. and can with ease destroy such as rebell against him.

The Prophet had before reprov'd the Rulers, and people in general for their Idolatry, Carnal security, Ingratitude, and Apostacy; now he comes to reprove the Counsellours and Rulers of the Kingdom of Israel in particular; for their oppression and cruelty, for their Epicurism, and beastly kind of life, *vers. 1. Hear this word yee King of Bashan.* This is the Prophets *exordium* and *Preface*, wherein he calls for attention, both in respect of the *Persons* he speaks to, and the matter he treats of, *viz.* the Sins of the Rulers and People.

2 We have the Judgements denounced against them for those Sins, set forth by a double Metaphor, *ver. 2, 3.*

3 Here is the confirmation of this threatening. 1 By the Oath of God, *I have sworn by my Holiness, saith the Lord,* that I will bring evil upon them; and secondly, their Sins have justly deserved it: for 1. They are a People given up to Idolatry, and hypocritical worshipping of me, *vers. 4. 5.* 3. They were indurate, impenitent, and incorrigible under variety of former judgements, *vers. 6. to 12.* The Prophet names Six.

1 Famine, I gave them cleanness of teeth, &c. *ver. 6.*

2 Drought, I will hold the rain from them, *ver. 7, 8.*

3 Blasting, Mildew, and the Palmer-worm, *ver. 9.*

4 The Pestilence, *ver. 10.*

5 The Sword, *ver. 10.*

6 Terrible Destruction, *ver. 11.*

4 Here is the unhappy success of all these dispensations of God towards them, which is annex to every particular Judgement, as a *Versus intercalaris*, the burden of this mournful complaint, *Yet have yee not returned unto me saith the Lord, vers. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.*

5 Seeing their incorrigibleness, the Prophet goeth on to denounce a sorer and sharper Judgement than any yet had befallen them, *vers. 12. Therefore thus will I doe to thee O Israel.* The Judgement was so dreadful that the Prophet seems unable to express it, and therefore he doth as 'twere draw a Vail over what he could not in words express: with a *Thus will I doe unto thee*; q. d. since nothing will move thee, I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction,

destruction, for fo it follows, *Chap. 8. 14. They shall fall and never rise up again.*

6 He concludes the Chapter with an Exhortation to Repentance, calling upon them to prepare to meet the Lord, by unfeigned Humiliation, and Reformation, that fo they might prevent those Judgements which were yet coming upon them, *verf. 12.*

7 The better to awaken them he useth two Motives, the first is drawn from the dreadfulnefs of the impending Judgements, which since they were not able to resist, hee exhorts them to prevent, considering also the advantage they had of a Covenant yet in being betwixt God and them, *ver. 12.* The second is drawn from the Majesty and Power of God, who was marching in wrath againft them.

In the first Verse the Prophet prosecutes the Charge which hee had begun (*Chap. 3. 9, 10.*) againft the Rulers and Judges of *Israel*, for their cruelty in oppressing the poor and needy. These usually are ring leaders in sin, their examples incourage others in wickednefs, and therefore the Prophet begins his Charge againft them; and after descends to the Priests and People, who were confederate with them in their wickednefs. Here we have

1 The Summons, *Hear this word.*

2 *Who* must hear? The Rulers of *Israel*, whom for their effeminacy he calls, *Kine of Bashan.*

3 Where doe they dwell? *In the mountain of Samaria.* This was the Metropolis and chief City of *Israel*, situate upon a Mountain; here was the Kings Palace where these Courtiers resided.

4 What doe they doe there?

Why they { Oppress the Poor.  
                  { They crush the Needy.  
                  { They call for drink.

Before he had described them darkly, and figuratively, calling them unruly Kine, but now he tells them plainly and punctually what they are, they are full fed Beasts, that goared their fellows, and trampled the poor under their feet:

5 But what said the Lord to all this? Why he swears by his Holiness that they shall dearly pay for this their cruelty, *vers. 2.*

So much shall suffice for the *Logical* Analysis, and resolution of the words, I come now to the *Grammatical* explication of them.

*Hear this word, viz. of the Lord, as it is explained, chap. 3. v. q. d. I come not to you in mine own name, or in the name of men, but I come to you in Gods name, it is his Message that I bring to you, and therefore justly calls for their best attention and obedience, the Original implieth both. Hear this word, 'tis emphatical in the Original, for the Article is doubled, q. d. Hear this word which the most true and eternal God (all whose words are works) hath spoken against you, and hear what hee hath decreed to bring upon you.*

*Shimgnu, audita, a shamang, audivit. obedivit. Gen. 3. 17. Haddavacr Hazzeh, hoc verbum, hoc ipsum.*

*See Kine of Bashan.* Thus he calls these wicked, wealthy, wanton Rulers, who managed the affairs of the Kingdom for the King, and did abuse their power to the oppressing of the poor; those feasted and fattened themselves with the spoils of the poor whom they oppress in judgement; and therefore the Prophet calls them not men, but Beasts, and fat Bawfons, whose hearts were fat as grease: and their eyes star'd out with fatness; they were stupid, and therefore he useth sharp expressions, the better to awaken them; he speaks to them in the feminine Gender (not because they were Women, as some conceive, for the sins which he reproves are more proper to men, especially the Rulers of a People) but because of their effeminate, wanton condition, being given to their bellies, therefore he calls them in his Herds-mans Dialect, \* *Cowes*; not Oxen or Horses which Plow and labour for us, but lazy lascivious Cowes and Heifers which were put into rich Pastures to fill and fat them the sooner for the slaughter. They were like to

fat, unruly, refractory Heifers which could endure no yoke. 'Tis usual in Scripture to call such idle, effeminate, loose persons, by the name of Females, *Isa. 3. 12. Revel. 17. 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 18.*

*Metaphorice designat eos qui opibus & potentia pollebant in regno Samariae, ac praeipue consilarii, Judices, praefecti. Parum in locum.*

*\* Hoc nomen recte in eos convenit, quoniam ventri tantum & delitiis indulgebant qui significat eos non agriculturam, sed immolationi & esui esse preparatos, i. e. occasione & captivitate. Hierom.*

7, 9, 18. such wealthy wicked men are elsewhere called, fat Bulls, and Bulls of Bashan, for their fierceness and cruelty, Psal. 22. 12. Jer. 50. 11. Hos. 4. 16. & 10. 11.

2. He calls them Kine of Bashan, because of the plenty of fat Cowes, and rich Pastures in that Country; hence we read of the fatlings of Bashan, Ezek. 39. 18. and Rams of the brood of Bashan, Deut. 32. 14. now the Rulers of Samaria were like the Kine of Bashan, loaded with fatness, secure and drunken with worldly wealth and pleasures, insomuch as they slighted the Word of God, and contemned the Prophets which publisht it unto them, and so became like fat Beasts fitted for the slaughter.

*Caution.* The Lord doth not here simply condemn them for their Riches (which are blessings simply considered in themselves) but for the abuse of their riches and power.

1. In getting wealth by extortion and indirect practises.

2. For abusing them to the Oppression of the poor.

*Q.* Are we not forbidden to revile the Rulers of the People, and commanded to give no offence to any, and therefore Paul became all things to all men that hee might win them, 2 Cor. 10. 32, 33.

*Ans.* 1. We are forbidden reviling of Rulers, (Exod. 22. 28. Eccles. 10. 20. Acts 13. 5.) but never reprovng of them, neither is this an offence given, but unjustly taken by them. 2. We must distinguish between private reproaches, and Prophetical reproofs; for a Minister in the name of the Lord to reprove men for their open enormities is no rayling, nor reviling, but a faithful discharge of that duty which God hath intrusted them with, and strictly under severe penalties enjoyed them, Isa. 58. 2. Ezek. 3. 33. 1 Tim. 5. 20. and all the Prophets, with Christ and his Apostles, did practice it. Now Amos was a Prophet of God, and so by vertue of his Office might doe that which a private person who wants that Call, may not doe; besides, he being called extraordinarily, he had an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, hee knew the projects and practises of these ungodly great ones, and so might the more boldly reprove them. Hence David calls wicked men Dogs, Lions, Bulls, Psal. 22. 12, 13. 21. 22. and Solomon his Son calls wicked Princes hungry Bears, Prov. 28. 15. and Paul calls Nero a Lion, and Christ calls Herod a

1 Cor. 15. 32.

*Fox*, and *Amos* here calls them fatted *Cowes*. This down-right Prophet being not bred at Court, nor coming from the *Hall*, where men use silken words, and lofty titles of Honour; but coming from the *Stall*, according to his blunt and rustick language, he calls a Spade a Spade, and such as neglected their duties to pamper their Carcasses, he calls Beasts, not men; *q. d.* their flatterers look upon them as so many Heroes, and Gods on earth, but I that have seen their loathsome lusts, doe look upon them as so many fat Bulls, filthy Swine, and unruly Heifers, that will not bear the yoke of God.

*S* 1 Cor. 9. 22. 3 To that of the Apostle, in becoming all things to all men; 1. It was in all lawful things, and such as tended to the edification, and not to the destruction of any, 2. It was only in such things as are left indifferent by the Word of God, and in this sence only the Apostle became all things to all men, (1 Cor. 9. 19, 20, 21, 22.) amongst the Gentiles hee walks, as one that was not under the Ceremonial Law, that he might win them, *Acts* 15. 19, 20. and amongst the *Jewes* he observed the Ceremonial Law, that hee might not offend them, *Acts* 16. 3. & 18. 18.

4 It is the favour of men which is gained by flattering and unlawful means, which the Scripture condemns, *Gal.* 1. 10. *Doe I seek to please men? then shou'd I not bee the Servant of Christ*; the Interrogation is a strong Negation, *q. d.* when I was a Pharisee I pleased men, and followed their Traditions, but now I desire in singleness of heart to approve my self to God.

5 When the favour of men is sought in the first place, this cannot stand with sincerity, but when it is cast in upon us after a faithful discharge of our duty, wee may thankfully and joyfully receive it. It is said of Christ that he grew in favour first with God, and then with men, *Luke* 2. 52. and it was *Demetrius* his Honour, that he had a good report of all men, yea and of the truth it self, *3 Joh.* 12. It is possible for a Christian so to live that he may approve himself both to God and man; Christ walked so convincingly, that the Pharisees complained, that all the world went after him, (*Joh.* 12. 19.) and no wonder, since all the world was made by him; it is prudence therefore for a Minister so to live, and so to act; that  
if



if it be possible ( without detriment to the truth, and a good conscience ) he may have peace with all men. A free, sincere, and prudent discharge of his duty is the only way to obtain this.

*Who oppress the poor, and crush or bruise the needy; q. d. By* \* Gnathak, op-Jam<sup>2</sup> S

\* force and fraud you oppress them, and by your might and power you break and bruise those that have no helper. This is their daily practice, and constant trade, as the Present Tense, implies. Great Men many times are great Oppressors of the poor, which cannot help themselves against them. No doubt but they abused the rich by their Bribery and injustice, yet since the rich have many friends, but the poor is hated usually by his nearest relations, therefore they exercise their cruelty on them who have no helper.

*Which say to their Masters, bring, and let us drink.* Those corrupt Rulers thought it not enough that themselves oppress the poor, but they encouraged such as had authority over the People to fleece and slay them, that they might make merry together with their spoils. They call on their Comrades to add affliction to the afflicted, and to oppress the oppressed, which is such gross inhumanity, and horrid cruelty, that the Lord swears in the next verse, that he will not pardon it.

*babeant suarum alimenta voluptatum: Hos recte Homerus* *Autocōgers* appellat, i. e. *populi devoratores. Ribera in locum.*

They say to their *Masters, or Lords* of the poor, that is, to such as have the mastery over them, *viz.* their rich Creditors, and Usurers, who have and keep them under as their Slaves and Vassals; these Rulers say unto them, *Bring, that we may drink*; that is, bring in Money and Presents, bring bribes and rewards that we may make merry, drink wine, and feast with the prey and spoils of the poor. Thus they claw

*erant obarati. Calvin.* \* *Sbath, bibis, convivatus est, quia in convivio largitur bibi soler.* Summam impudentiam notat, quod non modo quævis munera sponte oblata recipiant; verum etiam ille sibi offerri pestulent; & quidem non in alium usum quam ut potandi & voluptandi materio sufficiat. *Gnathak in locum.*



one another in their wickedness, saying, Bring but Money and yee shall have what yee will, especially against the poor and needy, we will deliver them into your hands, doe you pick their bones, suck their blood, and use them as you please; only bring and bribe well and you may have any thing at our hands against them. At feasts they were wont to drink freely, *Ad hilaritatem non ad ebrietatem*, for cheerfulness, not excess, (*Gen. 43. 34. Cant. 5. 1. Job. 2. 10.*) and therefore by a Synecdoche, *Drinking* is put here for *Feasting*, where there is both eating and drinking, yet because drinking of Wine was much used in feasting, therefore in Scripture it is oft put for feasting; as *Isa. 5. 11. Joel 1. 5. Amos 6. 6.* hence the Greeks called their Feasts, *Symposia, compotationes*, not eatings, but drinkings.

*I* God wants not Instruments to doe his work; if he will have a people taught, he can raise up *Amos* an Herdsman to reprove a brutish people; yea by an *Asse* hee can reprove the madnes of a *Balaam*, *2 Pet. 2. 16.* Hee usually chuseth the things that are not, viz. of any esteem in the eyes of carnal men, to confound the things which are of high esteem amongst them, *1 Cor. 1. 27, 28, 29. 1 Sam. 2. 6, 7, 8. Psal. 8. 2. & 78. 70, 71. Matth. 4. 18.*

*Cautiō*, not that this gives liberty for every one that supposeth himself Gifted to Preach without any Call; for though *Amos* were an Herdsman, yet he was both gifted and called extraordinarily by God, as appears, *Amos 7. 15. The Lord took me as I followed the flock, and said to me, Goe, Prophecie unto my people Israel.* Here is his Call, and he shewed his extraordinary Call, by his extraordinary gifts; whereas those Enthusiasts amongst us, who pretend to an extraordinary Call, upon trial are found not to have ordinary gifts; they can hardly write one line of true English.

*2 Obs.* It is lawful sometime to use a Preface, the better to quicken attention. We are by nature dull and slow to beleieve, or practice the truthes of God, and therefore we had need of all good means to quicken us. But of this \* elsewhere.

*3 Obs.* Ministers must Preach the Word of God to the people. They must not preach their own Fancies, or mens Inventions, but they must publish Gods Counsels, teaching men to observe whatsoever he commands them, *Matth. 28. 20.*

*1 Cor.*

\* See my  
Comment. on  
*Psalm 32. 1. p. 93.*  
10.

1 Cor. 11. 23. *De Deo nil sine Deo*, we must doe nothing in Gods Worship without the warrant of his Word; all must be done according to Gods pattern, without adding or detracting, *Dent. 12. n/t. Prov. 30. 6.* Hence it is that all the Prophets (as *Amos* doth here,) came with a *Dixit Dominus*, *Thus saith the Lord, and, Hear the Word of the Lord*, *Ezek. 1. 3.* *Hof. 1. 1. Jonah 1. 1. Micah 1. 1. Zech. 1. 2. Mal. 1. 1.* Hee that preacheth to Gods people must publish his Oracles to them, 1 *Pet. 4. 11.* such a man may preach with power and authority. It is this Word of God which Gods people must read, *Deut. 6. 6, 7.* this they must search into, *Joh. 5. 39.* this they must meditate on, *Psal. 1. 2.* and this they must practise, *Joh. 13. 17.* and therefore great reason that this, and this Word only they should hear.

See this Point excellently enlarged, and all superstitious cavils answered, by Master *Atterfol*, on *Numb. 3. 4.* p. 137. to 143. & p. 167

1 Away then with those Atheistical Sectaries who contemn Gods Word, and prefer their own brainfick Revelations. Raptures, New Lights, and Satanical delusions before the pure and perfect Word of God, These are not of God, because they reject his Word, 1 *Joh. 4. 6.* these follow lying Vanities, and so forsake their own Mercies; they reject the Law, which shewes they have no light in them, *Isa. 8. 20.*

Those Ministers then are to be blamed: that instead of saying with *Amos*, *Hear the Word of the Lord*, they cry, *Hear what Aristotle, Tully, Plato, Plutarch, Pindarus, Seneca*, say; how oft doe they cry, *Thus saith Austin*, and thus saith *Ambrose*, when it may be they never once saw, much less perused those Authors, only they name them to get a name for Learned men, when indeed it is a very poor peice of learning to get a few fragments, and scraps of Latine in that kind together. Wee are Gods Embassadors, and must keep close to our Commission; and though we may \* occasionally (as the \* See my  
Apostle did) and sparingly cite Heathens to convince them S schools  
out of their own VVriters, or else to shame Christians that Guard, ch. 3.  
come short of them; yet we may in no wise make it our con- p. 48.  
stant practise.

4 Obs. Gods Ministers who are sent by him, must plainly tell even great men of their sins; so doth *Amos* here, he sleights the sinful greatness of men, and emboldens himself upon his authority and calling. Though they were fat and full, high and haughty, yet he tells them to their faces, that they acted

See more in  
my Comment,  
on Psal. 82. 2.  
Obf. 1. P. 96,  
97.

*W. Munsters*  
Colmogaph  
in *Frisland*.

rather like Beasts, than men, and should dearly pay for their cruelty. It is true, poor men must be reprov'd when they sin, but rich men especially, because the sins of great men are great sins, and by their example they doe much hurt to others. Hence *Samuel* reprov's *Saul*, and the man of God reprov's *Jeroboam* for usurping, and intermeddling with the Priests Office, which belonged not unto him, *1 King. 13. 1, 2, &c.* Their falls are not only *Personal*, but *Epidemical*, and teach general disobedience, as they complain'd of *Queen Vashti*, that her disloyalty would make others disloyal, *Heft. 1. 16, 17.* It is in the body Politick, as in the body Natural, if the Vitals be poysoned, the inferiour parts cannot bee free; each Vein, and Nerve, and Artery, like the flowing streams of some polluted Springs, are receptracles of their infection, as well as nature. Let *Jeroboam* but set up Calves, and all *Israel* is presently upon their knees to them. How many silly people by following their Rulers have run themselves into destruction; like the Prince of *Frisland*, who asking what became of his Progenitors and Friends that were dead in their ignorance and error? Answer was made, That they were in Hell; hee desperately replied, that then hee would goe thither after them. Subjects are ambitious to follow their Princes, Tenants their Landlords, and Servants their Masters, though they forsake God to doe it. It was none of the worst counsel which the good Judge in *Lucian* gave to *Softratus* when he released him; *Be good* (saith hee) *and see thou teach not thy offence to others*; for there are some who doe at once, in the very same act, both commit and teach sin, and so to the numberless number of their own transgressions, adde the sins of thousands.

*The King of Bashan.*

*1 Cor. 15. 32*

*5 Obf. Wicked men are brutish men.* Their prosperity and pomp bestors them, *Jer. 49. 5. 21.* it fills them with insolence and blasphemy (*Psal. 73. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.*) and debaseth them beneath the beasts that perish, *Psal. 49. 20.* because they *have no changes, therefore they fear not God*; because they are not emptied from vessel to vessel, but they live secure and at ease, therefore their scent abides within them, *Jer. 48. 21.* Hence it is that they are so oft compared in Scripture to Bulls, Bears, Doggs, Swine, &c. as I have else where shewed at large.

*That*

In my Com-  
ment. on Psal.  
73. 22. Obf. 6.  
and on Psal.  
82. 4. Obf. 6.  
p. 122

*That dwell in the Mountain of Samaria,*

6 Obf. God takes notice of the dwellings of men. He knows where his enemies dwell, *Obadiab* 3. and he knows where his people dwell, *Ezek* 26. *Zeek* 2. 7. *Revel* 2, 13. he knows our \* names, our natures, our callings and conditions, *Alt* 16. 14, 15, yea not only our integral parts, but even the hairs of our head are numbred by him, *Mat* 10. 30. He sees us though we see not him, *John* 1. 47. and knowes us by our names before we have a being; *Jofiah* was called by his name three hundred years before hee was born, *1 King* 13. 2.

\* See this point largely handled, in *Atterfol*, on *Numb* 1. 6. Doct. 2. p. 20. to 28.

God hath a particular and distinct knowledge of every man and woman in the world: hee perfectly knowes all things past, present, and to come, (*Acts* 15. 18.) and that not successively and by discourse, by debating and searching out the causes of things, but in a moment, by one eternal act of understanding he knoweth all things, with their causes and conditions, in himself, and of himself, without any reasoning or help from others, what was done, or is to be done a thousand years hence, is as present with him as a thing that is past, *Pfal* 90. 4. Hee calls the things that are not as if they were, *Rom* 14. 17. and knew *Jeremy* before he was formed in the Womb, and ordained him to be a Prophet, *Jer* 1. 5. Gods knowledge is infinite, and eternal, like himself; our knowledge is dark, imperfect, uncertain, confused; but Gods knowledge of us, and ours, is an absolute, perfect, clear, certain, distinct knowledge; we know the outside and superficies of things, but God searcheth the heart, and knowes not only our faces, but our spirits (*1 Sam* 16. 7. *Jer* 17. 9, 10.) all things are naked and anatomized before him, *Job* 34. 21, 22. *Heb* 4. 13.

How careful then should we be, to walk in the midst of our houses with perfect hearts, (*Pfal* 101. 2.) since Gods eyes are upon our habitations, and he sees our walking there. This should make us dedicate our houses to the service of God, (*Pfal* 30, the title of the Psalm, *2 Sam* 6. 20.) that so they may be *Bribeis*, houses of God, and not *Bitha-oms*, houses of vanity and iniquity. Wee should put away sin farre from our Tents and Tabernacles, that the eyes of Gods jealousy may see nothing amongst us to displease him, *Job* 22. 23

5  
5  
8

see the benefit, v. 24. to 30. Let the name of our dwellings be, *Jehovah Shammah, the Lord is there*: Ezek ult. ult. let not idleness, ryot, and prophaneness dwell there, but let the glory of the Lord, and his fear dwell there; let it bee said of your houses as *Hagar* said of her VVell (*Gen. 16. 14.*) Beer-la-hai-roi, *the Well of him that lives and sees me.* So say thou, Berh-la-hai-roi, The house and dwelling of him that lives and sees me. Wee shall never bee sincere till wee can walk as in Gods eye continually, as *Enoch* and *Abraham* did, *Gen. 5. 24. & 17. 1. & 24. 40.*

7 Obs. *Great men many times are great Oppressors.* It is these fat Cowes of *Baschan* that goar their fellows. Riches accidentally make men cruel and insolent; it were rich men that oppress the poor, and drew them by violence before Judgement Seats, *Jam. 2. 6.*

8 Obs. *Luxury breeds oppression.* As covetousness is never satisfied, so neither is intemperance; when great men are wedded to their lusts, then to maintain them they fall to oppression, crying, *Give, give, that we may drink.* Men devoted to their lusts are insatiable, though they have enough, yet like fat beasts they must drink more; they make their bellies their gods, and therefore it is no wonder to see them active in promoting its interest to the utmost, *Isa. 22. 13. 1 Cor. 15. 32.* this ruines Persons and Nations. The *Curii*, and *Fabritii*, by their contentation and temperance advanced the *Roman* Empire, when their Successors by Covetousness and Luxury destroyed it.

9 Obs. *Wicked Rulers usually are great Bribers.* They are all for gifts and rewards, crying, *Hab, Hab, Give, give, Bring, bring, Hos. 4. 18.* they stirre up Lawyers, Attornies, and other inferiour Officers, to bring in Griefe to their Mills, that they may divide the spoyle, and make a prey of their poor Clients. Great men want not instruments to assist them in their wickedness be it never so vile; let *Jesabel* but contrive the Tragedy of *Naboths* death; and she will finde Elders that will act it for her. If *Amnon* be sick of Lust, there is a *Jonadab* ready to adde fuel to the flame. Did not the Lord bind Kings in chains, and great ones in fetters of iron, setting them their bounds which they cannot pass, there would be no living for good men in the world.

Against Bribery, see my Comment. on Psal. 82, 1. p. 89.

10 Obf. *It is the property of wicked men to incourage one another in their wickedness.* They cry, *Come*, let us drink, and be merry with the spoils of the poor. Thus *Persecutors* say, *Come* let us lay our heads together, and work wisely, that we may destroy Gods people, *Exod. 1. 10. Prov. 1. 11.* The unclean Person also hath his *Come*, let us take our fill of lust, *Prov. 7. 18.* The *Idolater* hath his, *Come*, let us joyn together to make our Idols, *Isa. 42. 7.* The *Drunkard* saith, *Come*, let us fetch Wine, and fill our selves with strong drink, to morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant, *Isa. 56. 12. 9. d.* though we drink till we be drunk, and stark mad, yet we fear no punishment, we shall fare no worse to morrow than we have done to day; God regards not such things as these; and if the wicked have their *Comes*, *Gen. 11. 3.* why should not Gods people have their *Comes*? wee should incourage each other in goodness, and call one another to the publick Assemblies, saying, *Come, let us goe to the house of the Lord*, *Isa. 2. 3, 5. Zech. 8. 21.* wee should call men to Christ as the Prophet doth, saying, *Come, come, come*, *Isa. 55. 1. 3.* *Philip* calls *Nathaniel* to come to Christ, and the *Woman of Samaria* calls her Neighbours, *Joh. 1. 46. & 4. 29.* this duty of stirring one another up to the best things is oft commanded, as a special preservative against sin, *1 Thes. 5. 11. Heb. 3. 12, 13. & 10. 24.* it is not sufficient that wee practise the Truth our selves, but wee must encourage those about us also so to doe, *Gen. 18. 19.* wee are dull and backward to the best things, and have need of quickning, *Prov. 27. 17.*

## VERSE 2.

*The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness, that loe the dayes shall come upon you, that he will take you away with hooks, and your posterity with fish-hooks.*

**I**N the precedent Verse we had the *Sin* of the Rulers of *Samaria*, now comes their *Punishment*. The Prophet here tells them, that the time is even now at hand when the Lord will visit for all their Idolatry, Oppression, &c. and to procure the more credit and authority to what he spake, hee brings in the



*Verodhs, in  
sanctitate sua,  
i. e. per sancti-  
tatem suam,  
Heb. enim Verh,  
i. e. In, est nota  
jurantis.*

Lord himself swearing their destruction; Gods bare word had been sufficient, but the better to awaken these secure Sinners, and assure them of some approaching Judgement, he tells them, that the Lord had sworn *by his Holiness*; that is, by himself, for Holiness is so essential to God, that hee may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be Holy, and Good. Man when he swears must swear by a greater than himself, but since there is none greater than God, therefore the Lord swears by himself, *Heb. 6. 13.* it is himself that is meant when he swears by *his great name*, *Jer. 44. 26.* *By his Soul*, *Jer. 51. 14.* *Amos 6. 8.* and by *his Holiness*, as here; for whatsoever is in God, is God himself.

In this Verse we have two parts.

1 *A Commination* of a dreadful Judgement.

2 *A Confirmation* of this Commination with an Oath; the Judgement threatned is in these words, *Loe, the dayes shall come upon you*, (i. e.) direful, dismal dayes, full of misery, and calamity shall certainly and suddenly surprize you, when you shall be carried away captive by the *Assyrian* (*Amos 3. 18, 19, 20.*) As men have their dayes of sinning, so God hath his appointed times when he will visit for sin, *Jerem. 46. 21.*

Obj. *We are rich and mighty, and cannot easily bee carried away?*

*Facilitatem  
indicat qua  
vosses eos non  
aliter ac pisci-  
culos solent Pis-  
catores capturi  
sunt & abduc-  
turi. Mercer.*

*Ans.* Riches away! not in the day of Gods Wrath; the *Assyrian* shall as easily carry you away as the Fisher doth his little Fish which he catcheth with his hook or thorn, and puts into his bagge; they shall not need Carts to carry you away, *Fish-hooks shall doe it.* It is a Metaphor frequent in Scripture, as *2 King. 19. 28.* *Job 41. 1, 2.* *Ezek. 19. 4. & 29. 9. & 38. 4.*

3 Here is the aggravation of their misery, they shall not only perish themselves: but their posterity shall suffer with them; *You shall be taken away with Hooks like \* Thorns, and your posterity with † Fish-hooks*, q. d. you shall be like Fishes which are industriously caught, easily pulsed up, and suddenly carried away on a Thorn, or Fish-hook, yee shall bee no

\* *Thynoth,*  
*spinis, i. e. ha-*  
*mis. v. Leigh.*  
*critic. S. Heb.*  
*p. 200.*

† *Besiroth dugah, hamis piscatoriis, Siroth a Sir, spina, olla, hamus, significat spinas seu hamos quibus minora animalia trajici solent, & venelia proponi, &c. Samlins.*

more.



more like fat Kine which abide in their Pasture, but I will root up you and yours, you shall be carried into Captivity. As the Fisher driveth the Fish out of his holds, and then catcheth and killeth it; so shall the *Assyrians* violently pull you out of your holds and habitations for the slaughter.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 Obs. *Swearing in it self is not unlawful.* God himself who cannot sin, yet swears by his Holiness; so *Isa.* 45. 23. & 62. 8. *Jer.* 51. 14. *Heb.* 6. 13. but of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com.  
on 1 Tim. 4. 1.  
p. 305. Doct.  
*Gonge* on Heb.  
6. 13. p. 87. to  
92.

2 Obs. *God is Holiness it self.* It is essential to him, and therefore it is here put for himself. The Lord hath sworn by his Holiness; that is, by himself. Holiness in Angels and Men is Accidental, they may lose their Holiness and yet bee Creatures still; but Holiness is so con-natural to God, that hee may as soon cease to bee God, as to be holy. But of this elsewhere.

Beauty of Ho-  
liness, chap. 1.

3 Obs. *It is a very hard thing to convince secure Sinners of an approaching Judgement.* God is constrained to swear here, to assure them of the certainty and infallibility of his Threatnings. As in times of Adversity and Temptation men are hardly brought to beleieve the Promises, (*Psal.* 116. 11.) so in times of Prosperity: it is hard to convince men of the truth of Gods Threatnings; *I shake to thee in thy prosperity, and thou wouldst not hear,* *Jer.* 32. 21.

See more in  
*Greenhill* on  
*Ezek.* 12. 22.  
Obs. 1. p. 493.  
and Mr. Trapp  
on *Jer.* 22. 21

4 Obs. *Sin and Punishment are inseparable.* In the first Verse we had their *Sin*, and in this second, their *Punishment*; as men have their daies of sinning, so God hath his dayes of punishing for sin, *Dent.* 28. 16, 17, &c. *Psal.* 37. 13. *Jer.* 46. 21. & 50. 27. 31. *Joel* 1. 15. *Luke* 19. 43. *Revel.* 18. 8.

No sooner had *Ahab* killed *Naboth*, and taken possession of his Vineyard, but presently the Lord sends *Elijah* with a whole volley of Judgements against him, 1 *King.* 21. 16. to 25.

5 *Such as oppress others, shall at last bee oppressed themselves.* Look what measure men mete to others, God will raise up some that shall mete the like to them again. These

fat

fat Beasts did goar the poor, and get their estate from them; now the Lord raiseth up the *Assyrian* against them, who with their Hooks should pull them out of their estates and habitations, as Fishes out of the water. God loves to pay Sinners in their own coyn, and to retaliate the wrongs which they have done to others. Thus *Adonibezek* confesseth, that as he had done to others, so God had required him, *Judg. 1:7.* such as shew no mercy to others, shall have none themselves, *Jam. 2. 13.* *Babylon*, that had tortured and abused the Saints, must have double given her, *Revel. 18. 6.* the *Sodomites* that burnt with lust, were burnt with fire from heaven. *Gen. 19. 5. 24.* *Josephs* Brethren that sold him into distress, were at last distressed themselves, and acknowledge Gods Justice in it, *Gen. 43. 21.* *Dauids* Sin in numbering the people, was punished with diminishing of the people. Hereby God doth more sensibly convince men of their Sin, when they may read it in the punishment.

Thus those who are disobedient to their Parents, God raiseth up of their Children that shall rebel against them. Those that abuse their first Wives, are oft-times punished by the second; and those Servants that were false to their Masters, shall be punished with Servants that will be perfidious to them. Let us therefore by the punishment labour to finde out the Sin that brought it, and judge our selves for it, and we shall not be judged of the Lord, *1 Cor. 11. 32.*

6 Obs. When a People are ripe for ruine they shall suddenly and easily be destroyed. God staies but till the sins of a People be full, and then he suddenly brings them down, *Gen. 15. 16.* look how easily the Fisher pulls up his little Fish with his Hook, and carries it away; so easily did the *Assyrian* carry away this Idolatrous people into Captivity, now that their day was come. There is no power or policy against God, hee can destroy the stoutest enemy with the greatest facility, *Isa. 25. 11.* if he be angry with a People, he wants not Fishers, Hooks, Hunters, to pursue them, and carry them away, *Jer. 16. 16. Hab. 1. 14, 15, 16.*

7 Obs. Children many times fare the worse for their wicked Parents. The Parents are taken away with hooks, and the Potterity with Fish-hooks; root and branch must be stockt up. It is just with God to cut off the wicked with their seed,

See more in  
*Greenhill* on  
*Ezek. 29. 4.*  
p. 553. and in  
my Comment.  
on *2 Tim. 3. 9.*  
p. 183.

as we kill the Wolf with her Litter, and the Fox with her Cubs, *Dent.* 28. 41. *Hof.* 13. 16. But of this at large elſewhere.

In my Comment. on *Hof.* 13. 16. Obſ. 12. p. 80, to 86. & *Atterſol* on *Numb.* 14. 34. P. 615.

## VERSE 3.

*And yee ſhall goe out at the breaches, every Cow at that which is before her, and yee ſhall caſt them into the Palace, ſaith the Lord.*

**T**He Prophet continues his Threatning, as appears by the Copulative, *And, yee ſhall goe out of the Breaches.* Hee amplifies their calamity by that fear and conſternation which ſhould ſurprize them; the walls of *Samar*a being broken down, thoſe Grantees which before went in great ſtate and order, ſhould now confuſedly, like ſo many frighted Beaſts, flee out at every breach to ſave themſelves; ſo that in this Verſe we have, as in the former, 1. *A Commination*, or Judgement threatned, *Yee ſhall goe out at the breaches.* 2. *A confirmation of this Commination, ſaith the Lord.* The better to awaken them he adds this again, that they had not to doe with man, but with the Almighty, who will not be mocked, nor dallied withall.

The Prophet goes on in directing his ſpeech to the Nobles, Judges, and Counſellours of the Land, though he ſpare not the inferiour ſort, yet becauſe the Rulers were the ring-leaders in ſin, therefore he bends his ſpeech principally againſt them.

1 Here is the Title which he gives them, viz. *Gomes*, a blunt term, but a fit one; this is implied in the feminine Gender, *Una quaq; ſcil. vacca*, as verſe the firſt, *q. d. you look upon your ſelves as great men, but in my eye yee are as ſo many fat Beaſts, and not one of you ſhall eſcape Gods revenging hand,* 2 *King.* 17. 20.

2 Here is the miſery that attends theſe wanton luxurious Beaſts, they ſhall be ſo full of fear, that they ſhall run out at the breaches of the walls, leaving all their riches behind them.

The words admit of ſome difficulty, and therefore I ſhall open them diſtinctly.

*Yee ſhall goe out of the breaches, viz.* Which the enemy hath made

made in your walls. *Samaritan* had been long besieged, and the *Assyrian* had made many breaches in the walls of the City, at which they attempted to run out and save themselves by flight, even as Beasts when they are frightened run out at a gap.

*Every Cow at the breach which is before her*; that is to say, any way, for they had neither Gates nor Walls whole. Valiant men keep their ranks and files in despite of all opposition, *Joel* 2. 7, 8. but faint-hearted, fearful sinners shift for themselves, and take the next gap to run out at. As beasts when chased, run on heaps disorderly, so these fly from their enemies tumultuously, and confusedly, without any respect to their companions; seeking only to save themselves, *Amos* 2. 14, 15, 16.

*And yee shall cast them into the Palace*; q. d. that yee may fly away the swifter, yee shall cast away your pleasant and precious things, and shall fly naked from your enemy. The Learned conceive there may be an *Eccipsis* in the words, which may be thus supplied; yee shall cast away those things [which yee have brought] into the Palace, as Tribes, Treasures, Jewels, and precious things which you brought into the Palace, for security and safety in that strong place; yee shall now in your fear cast them all away. This is conceived to be the most genuine sense, yet the learned are divided.

1 Some render the word thus, Yee shall be cast as Captives into *Armenia*, or into Mount *Armon*; but these mistake the Original word, *Haharmonah*: where *Harmon* is not a proper name, but a common name, and signifieth a Palace, High-house, or Tower, from *Ram*, *altus*, *excelsus*.

2 Others thus, *You shall cast your selves into the Palace*, viz. to hide yourselves there, from the fury of the *Assyrian*, but in vain, for hee shall batter those Towers, and take you there.

3 *Calvin* thus, *You shall cast your selves, e Palatio*, out of the Palace, that is, yee shall fly for your lives, and leave all your pleasant things behind you in your forsaken Palaces.

4 The *Dutch* Annotations thus, Yee shall throw away that which was brought into the Palace, (*i. e.*) that which you

In Harmon,  
vulg. in *Ar-*  
*meniam*,  
Chald.

you gathered into your Palaces by violence and robbery, you shall now throw it away, alluding to that of Amos 3. 10. *Ye have store up violence and robbery in your Palaces; but when the Sword comes ye shall throw all away, and think it well if ye can save your lives; so that in these two Verses we have a three-fold punishment threatened against Israel, 1. Banishment, and transplantation out of their own Land, Vers. 2. 2. Flying before their enemies. 3. Loss of goods, ver. 3.*

Ye shall cast away the things of the Palace, so the Margin of our Bible.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Fear and amazement is the proper portion of wicked men.*

Those that fear not God, have cause to fear every thing. All are enemies when God is an enemy, *Deut. 28. 65. Prov. 28. 1. Joel 2. 6.* these men here run, some this way, and some another way; one runs out of the City, and another runs into the Palace, but all in vain, for there is no escaping when God pursues, *Amos 9. 1, 2, 3, 4.* though wicked men may seem full of courage and confidence in times of peace, yet when Judgement shall arrest them, none so much amazed as they, *Levit. 26. 36. Isa. 33. 14. Dan. 5. 6.* But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on Psal. 73. 19. See *Afterfol* on Numb. 22. 3.

2 *Obs. Wicked men are the Pests of the places where they dwell.* By their sins they bring down the walls of Cities, and make breaches in them for their enemies to enter and destroy them, the very stones and timber cry for judgement against them, *Zech. 5. 4.*

p. 874, 875 See more in my Com. on *Hof.* 13. 16. *Obs.* 7.

3 *Observe. Partners in sin will leave men in their sorrow.* Those that were united before, yet when judgement comes they look for the nearest Breach to run out at, not staying for others. When Judas was troubled in conscience for betraying his Lord and Master, his companions in sin leave him to shift for himself, with a *Look thou to that*, *Mat. 27. 4.*

p. 71

4 *Obs. Creature-comforts cannot stand us in a day of wrath.* *Prov. 11. 4.* Silver and Gold will not then avail, *Ezek. 7. 19.* all Jewels and Treasures say us in time of distress, only the jewel of a good Conscience, like a faithful friend, will never leave us, nor forsake us.

See my Com. on *Hof.* 13. 15. p. 58, 59, 60.

## VERSE 4. 5.

*Come to Bethel and transgress, at Gilgal multiply transgression, and bring your Sacrifices every morning, and your Tithes after three years.*

*And offer a Sacrifice of thanks-giving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the Free-offerings, for this liketh you, O yee children of Israel, saith the Lord,*

**T**He Prophet goes on with his Charge against *Israel*, and that the justness of Gods Judgements, which he threatned to bring upon this people might bee made apparent to the world, he comes to set forth their gross *Idolatry*, together with their obstinacy and induration therein, insomuch as no Punishments could work upon them; this makes the Lord begin with a most biting and bitter *Sarcasm*, saying, *Goe to Bethel and transgress.*

The Prophet had before charged them with *cruelty*, now he upbraids them for their *Idolatry*, and false-worship, set up by *Jeroboam* their first King, augmented by many of the succeeding Kings, and endured so long as the Kingdom endured; till at last it brought them into Captivity, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

The Prophet here by a *Prolepsis*, prevents an Objection, whereas they might think to escape Gods Judgements by their Sacrifices, and Idolatrous services; the Prophet tells them, that this is so farre from pacifying Gods wrath, that it incenseth him the more against them, and therefore to expresse his great indignation against them, hee sarcastically bids them, *Goe to Bethel and transgress, &c.*

In the words we have, 1. An Ironical concession, or Sarcastical exhortation, *Goe to Bethel and transgress.* This seems to be a *Precept*, but is indeed a strong *Prohibition*, as appears, *Hos. 4. 15. Amos 5. 5. 21, 22. Seek not Bethel, enter not into Gilgal;* and therefore the Chaldee Paraphrast sets it down positively by way of assertion, *Yee have come to Bethel and transgress, yee have multiplied sins in Gilgal.* There they Worshipped the golden Calves out of a good intention, conceiving that they Worshipped God, when indeed they sacrificed

unto

In my Com. on  
*Hos. 13. 16*

*Est vox indignantis, Ironia quidem loquitur Deus, sed interea profert indignationem suam.*  
Calvin.

unto Devils (2 Chron. 11. 15.) and therefore the Lord here in an holy indignation Ironically upbraids them with their Idolatry, *q. d.* Since by no means you will be reclaimed, but are desperately set on your own ways, since there is no remedy, goe on, take your own hearts lusts, and fill up the measure of your iniquity. Hee gives them the reins in wrath, and since they will be filthy, he bids them be filthy still. As angry Parents are wont to say to their desperate Children, I see you will have your own ways, why since there is no remedy, goe on and perish. The like Sarcastical, taunting speeches, testifying Gods indignation against sin, we have in other places; as Jer. 7. 21. Ezek. 20. 39. *Goe and serve every one his Idols, q. d.* follow your Idols if you please, I had rather yee did so, than dissemble as you doe, to my dishonour.

Rev. 22. 11. *S*

2 What must they doe, or rather what must they not doe at Bethel? why, 1. They must transgress, viz. the Law of God concerning his Worship. 2. Multiply transgressions. 3. Bring their Sacrifices every morning. 4. Their Tithes at three years end. 5. Yet more, offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving; and 6. Proclaim the Free-will-offerings.

3 Here is the ground of all their Idolatry, superstition, and Will-worship, for this pleaseth you, O yee children of Israel; *q. d.* it is not I that command you so to doe, but it is your own rebellious wills that set you on work, you love and desire to have it so.

Come to Bethel; Dan, Bethel, Gilgal, were the three chief places in which the Israelites did worship their Idols;

1 Dan was defiled with the Idolatry of the golden Calves, (1 King. 12. 29, 30. Amos 8. 14.)

2 Bethel signifies the House of God. it was the place where God appeared to Jacob, and after appointed it for the place of his Worship, Gen. 28. 17. & 35. 1. Hos. 12. 4. but Jeroboam setting up the golden Calves here, turned Bethel, the House of God, into Beth-aven, the house of Vanity and iniquity, of confusion and misery, Hos. 4. 15. & 5. 8. & 10. 5. The people had a good conceit of the Holiness of Bethel, where God appeared to Jacob, this made Jeroboam to set up a Calf there. This place formerly was called Luz, but upon Gods extraordinary appearing to Jacob there, when hee fled from his brother Esau, he changed the name, and called it Bethel, the house of God.



3 *Gilgal* was the key of *Canaan*, situate between *Jordan* and *Jericho*, this place was famous for sundry services there performed to God, there was the Tabernacle, and there Sacrifices were offered unto God. But now it became degenerate and infamous, insomuch that the Lord complains, *Hos. 9. 15. All their wickedness is in Gilgal*, that was the common sink and sewer where all their Idolatry met, and therefore the Lord forbids his People to goe to *Gilgal*, that they might not be tainted with the Idolatry of the place. Those Idolatrous *Israelites*, thought it not sufficient to worship the Golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but they would worship *Baal*, and other Idols, at *Gilgal* too; so dangerous it is to give way to superstition and false-worship, there is no end nor measure with such persons; they adde Sin to sin, and Idolatry to Idolatry, till they come to ruine.

*Multiply* \* *transgressions*, rebellions, prevarications, by your frequent Sacrifices, *q. d.* Goe on still and persevere in your perverse, malicious practises, adding sin to sin, and one provocation to another, that all the world may see your madness, and the justness of Gods Judgements on you.

\* *Peshawg*, *transgressio*, *prevaricatio*, *defectio*, *rebellio*, *non simplex* & *qualificans*, *s. d. maliciosus*, *Musculus*. *Proprie* significat *deficere ab ejus mandatis sub cujus imperio sic Ming.*

\* *Magna fuit audacia in hoc Propheta, qui etiam summa & optima in speciem opera, quæ Deo verè fiebant, non veritus est damnare & rejicere.* *Luther.*

*She'osbeth Jamim, tribus diebus, i. e. tertio anno.*

Bring your Sacrifices every morning; ; for so the \* Law enjoined them to offer a Lambe without blemish in Sacrifice every morning, and another at evening, *Exod. 29. 39. Numb. 28. 3, 4.* under the Morning Sacrifice is included also the Evening Sacrifice, but the Prophet expresseth only the Morning Sacrifice to note their diligence, and great pains which they took in observing these external Rites, they were at it as duly as the morning came.

And your Tithes after three years; or, in the third year. In the letter of the text it is *after three dayes*; it is an usual Hebrewism to put dayes for years, as *Gen. 24. 1. Numb. 9. 22. Levit. 25. 29. 1 Sam. 27. 7.* some understand it of their three solemn feasts appointed to be observed every year by the Law, *viz.* the Pascheover, Pentecost, and feast of Tabernacles;

in

in which none might appear empty-handed, but certain kind of Tithes were then to be spent, *Exod.* 23. 14, 15, 16, 17. *Levit.* 23. *Deut.* 16. but the most genuine sense is that which alludes to the Law, *Deut.* 14. 28, 29. & 26. 12. for the right understanding of this Law, we must know that there was a threefold Tithe paid by the Jewes, the first were the yearly Tithes given to the Levites; a second Tithe was set apart by the Owners for their journies, sacrifices, and feasting at *Jerusalem* thrice in the year, and yet there was a third Tithe laid up in store, which was distributed among the Levites, the poor, the fatherless, and the widow; and this is the third Tythe here mentioned. Now these Idolatrous *Israelites* son's Annot. on *Deut.* 14. 28, 29. See more fully Mr. A. T. Jackson's Annot. on *Deut.* 14. 28, 29. the better to colour their Hypocrisie, like Apes did seem to imitate this Law, that so they might not be wanting in any external duty of piety or charity.

*Q. But since these Israelites did what God commanded in the Law, wherein did they fail?*

*Ans.* 1. They fayled in sacrificing to Idols, and not to God. 2. In bestowing those Tithes on false Prophets, which were ordained for the maintenance of the true. 3. Though some of them did offer such Sacrifices as were commanded, and that to the true God, yet they fayled in the place, for they should have offered their Sacrifices at *Jerusalem*, where God had set his Temple (*Deut.* 12. 5, 6.) and they goe to *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, where Idols were set up.

The sum of all is this, *Thus saith the Lord in great indignation against you, O house of Israel, for your provocations, since ye obstinately refuse to hearken to me, and my Prophets, Goe too, proceed in your Idolatry, and since you are so besotted by Sathan, and his Agents, as to worship Calves instead of mee, goe on, and take your fill, glut your selves with sin, and fill up the measure of your iniquity, that wrath may come upon you to the uttermost, and since you refuse to goe to Jerusalem and worship mee, goe to Beth-aven and worship Devils, Goe on also in your Hipocrisie; and the worship which I have appointed to my People, that doe ye imitate, bring your Morning Sacrifices which are due to me, and offer them to your Idols; and that which the Law required of you, for the maintenance of my Levites and the Poor, viz. to lay aside the Tithes of every third year for pious and charitable uses;*  
doe

doe yee give that also to your Idols. Goe on also and Hypocritically imitate my people in Sacrifices of Thanksgiving, and Free-offerings, for in these external Ceremonies, yee delight, more than in internal obedience.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Ironical and Sarcastical, taunting biting speeches may lawfully be used as occasion requires against wicked men.* Those Stoical stocks the Quakers are against all laughter, and against all ingenious Ironies and Sarcastical speeches, as if they savoured of the flesh, when it is clear from many places of Scripture that they may lawfully be used; for, 1. We finde that God himself used them, *Gen. 3. 22. The man is become like one of us*; i. e. see how unlike to us he is become. So *Judg. 10. 14. Goe cry to the gods which yee have chosen*; i. e. let your Idols help you if they can in your distress. So *Isa. 8. 9, 10. & 47. 12. Ezek. 38. 3, 4, 5.* 2. Christ used them, *Matth. 23. 32. & 26. 45.* 3. The Prophets used them. Thus *Elijah* derided the worshippers of *Baal*, *1 King. 18. 27.* and *Micaiah* to *Abah*, *1 King. 22. 15.* and *Job 12. 2. & 26. 2, 3.* and *Solomon* to the young man, *Eccles. 11. 9.* and the Church to her enemies, *Lam. 4. 21. Rejoyce O Edom and be merry*; but know that thy feasting shall be turned into fasting, and thy mirth into mourning. So *Jer. 22. 20. & 46. 9, 11. & 51. 8. 11. Zech. 11. 13.* Paul used them, *1 Cor. 4. 8. 10. & 2 Cor. 11. 19. & 2. 12, 13.* yea the Scripture affords many *Sarcasms*, which are biting taunts, they are somewhat like an Irony, but that they are somewhat more bitter; as *Gen. 37. 19. Exod. 14. 11. Nahum. 3. 14.*

*Ironia species, est Sarcasmi, sed Ironia est acerbior. Glasius.*

2. *Obf. Wee must shun those places where Idolatry is set up.* *Israel* must not once goe to *Rethel*, and *Gilgal*, where Idols are, *Hof. 4. 15. Amos 5. 5.* what *Solomon* sayes of the Corporal Harlot, may fitly be applied to the Spiritual one, *Prov. 5. 8. Remove thy way farre from her, come not nigh the door of her house.* As we shun Pest-houses, so should we shun those infectious places. Such as partake with the wicked in their sins, shall share with them in their plagues, *Revel. 18. 4.* not only *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, but their followers also perishe with them, *Numb. 16.* It is dangerous for men to hear Quakers and Seducers, for by your example you doe not only in-

courage

courage others so to doe, but you make your selves accessory to their sin and punishment; what *Solomon* saies of all the wicked in general, holds true in this particular (*Prov. 4. 14, 15.*) we should *take heed of going in the way of evil men, avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.* See how the Holy Ghost useth variety of expressions to the same purpose and all to make the matter sink deeper into our hearts.

See more in  
my Cont. on  
1 Tim. 3. 5.  
p. 138, &c.

3 Obs. *Idolatry and Sin debase places.* *Bethel* and *Gilgal* formerly famous for the Worship of God, yet now become infamous for Idolatry, Gods people must not once come there. As sin debaseth persons, and makes them that they can never excel (*Gen. 49. 4.*) so it debaseth places too, and turns *Bethel*, the House of God, into *Beth-aven*, the house of vanity and iniquity, *Hos. 4. 15.* what *Michal* said of *David* falsely, *Thou hast made thy self vile*, (*2 Sam. 6. 20.*) that is most true of all Sinners, they make themselves, and the places where they live, vile and contemptible.

4 Obs. *There is no inherent holiness in places*; if there had, *Bethel* had not been *Beth-aven*, nor *Rome* become an Harlot. Places are not holy *per se & simpliciter*, but only *propter usum*, by reason of the praying, preaching, and dispensing of the holy Sacraments there. The place doth not commend the Prayers, but the sincere affection of him that prayeth; neither doth the place sanctifie the Prayers, but the Prayers the place; Churches are made of Wood and Stone, and so are incapable of Holiness; Christ came to redeem and sanctifie Souls, not seats. The Legal, Ceremonial, Typical Holiness of places is by the coming of Christ abolished, now, the substance is come, and the shadows are gone; in Gospel times there is no difference of places in respect of Holiness. God will now be worshipped in every place, *Mal. 1. 11. Joh. 4. 23.* *1 Tim. 2. 8.* the Field and the House are now as holy as the Church, yea *Paul* and *Silas* pray in Prison and are heard, *Acts 16. 25.* so that Churches in themselves are no more holy than other places; but it is the Ordinances of God, and the Assembly of Gods People met there, to celebrate those Ordinances, which for that present make it more holy, and more to be esteemed by us than all other places, or peeces of ground whatsoever, *Psal. 84. 10.* and therefore they should be kept sweet and decent, though not pompous and gaudy.

See this Point  
largely discust  
by D. Willet,  
*Synop. Papismi.*  
controvert 9th  
Q. 6. Art. 2.  
p. 480. edit. ult.  
& *Hildesham*  
on *Joh. 4. 23.*  
Lect. 33. p. 139  
Attensol on  
Numb. 7. 8, 9.  
p. 456. & p.  
494.

*Dicite Pontifices, in sacro quid facit aurum? Persius.*

The Heathen Poet could say, It is vanity to have gold in Temples. Here then is the difference between us and the Papists, they make Churches to be holy *per se*, in respect of the ground and building, but we in respect of the end and holy use for which they serve, *viz.* for the Service of God, and the Assemblies of his People; but the exercises of Religion being ended, and the Congregation dissolved, there is no more inherent Holiness remaining in it, more than in another place.

5 Obs. It is a great provocation to set up Idols there, where wee have received signal mercies. God had done great things for his people at *Beihel*, it was the place where hee appeared to his people; and *Gilgal* was very \*famous for many Mercies, at *Gilgal* they were *Circumcised*, there God rolled away the reproach of *Egypt* from them, there they had the *Passover*, and there was Sacrificing, &c. now to multiply transgressions at *Gilgal*, and to have all their villany acted there (*Hos. 9. 15.*) must needs be a great aggravation of their sin, and hasten wrath. To sin against signal Mercies doth double the sin. It is said of the *Israelites*, that they provoked him at the Sea, even at the red Sea (*Psal. 106. 7.*) where God shewed them a remarkable Mercy, in leading them safely thorow the Sea, and drowning their cruel enemies, yet there they provoked him, at the Sea, even at the red Sea; it is spoken Emphatically, even at that Sea which God had carried them safely thorow. Thus they made a Calfe in *Horeb* (*Psal. 106. 19.*) where the Lord appeared unto them, gave them his Law, and Made a Covenant with them, yet here they provoked him to wrath to their own destruction, *Dent. 9. 8.* it greatly aggravates sin when it is committed in a *Canaan*, and in a Land of Righteousness to deal unjustly, *Isa. 26. 10.* Wee of this Land have received many signal Mercies, if wee goe on to abuse them, as wee have done of late years, what can we expect but signal judgements.

6 Obs. Wicked men grow worse and worse; They fall away more and more, they do not only sin, but they multiply sin; they think it not sufficient to worship the golden Calves at *Dan* and *Beihel*, but they must to *Gilgal* also, and there worship *Baal*, which was the vilest and highest Idolatry, for those that worshipped the Calves, worshipped God, but in a false way,

*Atinus fuit peccatum Deum verum in imagine adorare, quam plane a Deo vero apostatare, & servire Diis alienis, Revel.*

way, but those utterly forsook the true God to worship *Baal*, whom they made their God, as appears by that of *Elijah*, *If Baal be a god*, implying that they esteemed him so. When wicked men begin to fall they know not where they shall rest, they have no foundation, but run from error to error, till at last they end in Atheism. (But of this at large elsewhere.) Evil men and deceivers grow worse and worse, though they be wearied in their wicked wayes yet they will goe on, *Jerem. 9.* 3. 5. they are in this like the lewd VVoman, *Lassana, non satiata*; they never come to their *Maximum quod sic*, in sinful wayes, *Prov. 23. ult.* Sin and Error is endless, it knowes not when, nor where to stop, *Hos. 10. 1. & 13. 2.* *Ahaz* that at first burnt Incense to Idols, at last burnt his Children to them, *2 Chron. 28. 3.* *Error minimus in principio, fit maximus in fine.* The cloud that at first shewes but like a mans hand, may suddenly over-spread the whole Heavens.

7 *Obi. Good intentions are no warrant for evil actions*; *Jeroboam* pretended well when hee set up the golden Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, saying, *Behold thy Gods, O Israel, which brought thee out of the Land of Egypt* (1 King. 12. 28.) his meaning was not to cast off the true God, but to set him forth by some visible resemblance, thinking that this might bee as good a way of Religion, as the Ark and Cherubims at *Jerusalem*; but the Lord tells them, that since they had set up a worship of their own inventing, hee abhorred both them and their services, (*Amos 5. 21, 22.*) and calls it a worshipping of Devils, *2 Chron. 11. 15.* Thus *Aaron* and the *Israelites* pretended well when they set up the golden Calf, *Exod. 32. 4, 5.* *Micah* and his Mother had a good meaning when they erected the Ephod, and Teraphim for the service of the true God, *Judg. 17. 3. 13.* *Paul* had a good meaning when hee persecuted the Saints, *Acts 26. 9.* yea and many that kill them think they doe God good service, *Joh. 16. 2, 3.* *Uzzah* it is conceived was a good man, and out of a good intent would have kept the Ark from falling, yet for meddling with that which belonged to the Priests, God smote him dead, *2 Sam. 6. 6, 7.*

Those gifted men amongst us that presume to Preach without a Call, no doubt but many of them have good intentions, and think they doe God good service, but because they have

In my Com.

on 2 Tim. 3.

13. p. 229.

Attends on

Numb. 14.

p. 591.

2 Tim. 3. 13. S'

5



no command nor commission from God so to doe, it is an abomination to him, and he will one day ask them, *Who required this at your hands?* Saul out of a good intent, viz. that hee might sacrifice, spared the fat Cartel; and Gideon made an Ephod for Gods Worship, which God had not commanded, but this ruined both them and their Families, *Judg. 8. 27.* 1 Sam. 15. 21. Nadab and Abihu had no evil intent in offering strange Fire, yet were smitten dead for their pains, *Levit. 10. 2, 3.* So the *Papists*, and the worst of men have their good meanings, which at last brings them to evil ends. It cannot excuse their evil dealing with God and his people. What Sin so vile that is not covered with the vail of a good meaning? How many wayes are there which seeme good in mens owne eyes, yet the issues thereof are the wayes of death, *Prov. 14. 12.* we may not therefore doe every man what seemeth good in his own eyes, but what is good in Gods eye, *Deut. 12. 8.*

Those things which in themselves are evil, may not for any good ends, or plausible intentions be practised. None may doe evil that good may come thereof, *Rom. 3. 8.* we must have a command from God for what we doe, else our owne good minds and meanings will doe us no good; yea this would open a gap to all manner of villanies; the Murderer, the Drunkard, the Traytor, &c. \* they all pretend they have good meanings in what they doe; but such vain conceits and crooked Rules of multitudes, custom, good meaning, &c. hath brought thousands to destruction; we must to the Law, and to the Testimony, and walk according to that rule if ever wee expect peace, *Gal. 6. 16.*

8 Obs. *In the Worship of God we must keep close to the Rule, for matter, manner, time, and place;* Israel failed here in these particulars, and therefore God rooted them up. 1 They changed the place of Gods Worship, 1 King. 12. 29. 2. The time, *vers. 32.* 3. The manner, *vers. 28.* 4. The Priests, *vers. 31, 33.* and this ruined them, 1 King. 13. 33, 34. it is not the Traditions of men, or Customes of Forefathers, Antiquity, or Succession that is our rule; the *Israelites* here might have pleaded Prescription for their Idolatry for above two hundred years; all their twenty Kings successively were Idolatrous from first to last; and the people generally followed them, yet this did not make their practice good;

5  
8  
Nulla necessitas incidere potest, qua legem in Christo latam evertere nos cogat; nam his parere summa est necessitas. Tilenus  
\* See more in Mr. Youngs Drunkards Character, Sect. 53. p. 206

good; all will-worship is vain worship, *Mat. 15. 9.* it is a Sin equalized to Murder, *Levit. 17. 3, 4.* it is called here *transgressing*, and *multiplying transgressions in Gilgal.* In Gods Worship we must doe nothing without the warrant of his See more in VVord, *Numb. 15. 39. Dent. 12. 8. 11. 13, 14. ult. Ezek. Mr. Strong 20. 19. Mat. 28. 30. Col. 2. ult.* his VVorship must bee his thirty one simple and pure, agreeable to his own will, not ours. The sele& Ser. on *Zech. 14. 9.* Head of the Sacrifice was to be cast away, implying, that in p. 465. Mr. matters Divine and heavenly, we must cast away our own fan-Burges on 0- cies and devices, keeping close to Gods VVord, as *Moses rig. Sin. p. 281. Mr. Vines* and Gods people did, *Exod. 39. 2. 5. 7. 21. 26. 29. 32. Sermon on 2 Cor. 11. 3. Drunkards Chara-*

Act, Sect. 54. p. 2. 11. &c. Mr. *Cowdry* against Doct. *Hammond*, in a Treatise of his against Superstition and Will-worship, Mr. *Crofton* against Altars.

9 Obs. *Religious duties must be our daily task.* VVe must not bring our Sacrifices once a month, or once a year, but as the Lord renews his Mercies every morning, so must we renew our sacrifices of Prayer and Praises (*Exod. 29. 38, 39. Numb. 28. 3, 4.*) our daily wants, our daily dangers, our daily temptations, call upon us for daily Prayer; such constant Customers shall be sooner and better served, than such as are strangers to those duties. *David* was a constant Trader in Prayer Morning and Evening, and see what follows? *Thou shalt hear me*, *Psal. 55. 17.* As the Priest was every morning to renew the Fire on the Altar, and to lay thereon the Morning Sacrifice, so should we *when we awake bee still with God*, *Psal. 139. 18.* all things are blest unto us by Prayer; As the Ark when it came to the house of *Obed-Edom* it brought a blessing with it; so when duties are set up in their power, there God comes and blesseth his people, we should therefore dedicate our houses to God by Prayer as *David* did, *Psal. 30. title*, and *2 Sam. 6. 20.* It was an high commendation of *Aurelian* the Emperours Family, that it was *refertabon-s*, & See at large *Ecclesia Dei*, it was full of good people, and was a little *Atterfol* on Church. So were the houses of the faithful in the Primitive *Philemon 2.* times, hence we read so oft, *To the Church in thy house*, *Rom. 16. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 19. Col. 4. 15.* *Philemon 2.* the words will bear a double construction. 1. It implies, that the peo- Edit. 11.

ple of God met in those houses to hear his Word preached, to celebrate the Sacraments, and Pray; for publick places were not then allowed them. 2. Or else it notes unto us that their private Families were now so piously ordered, and religiously instructed, that they seemed to be little Churches rather than ordinary houses, because of the Praying, Reading of Gods Word, singing of Psalmes, and other religious Exercises that were practised there. So *Joshua* resolved, that hee and his house would serve the Lord, *Josh. 24. 15.* Religion makes the best Families, it breeds the best Children, and makes the most obedient Subjects, and Servants, as wee see in *Abrahams* Family. Sad is the condition then of those Christians that take no care of their Families, but let Luxury, Riot, and disorder debate them; such houses may better bee called Taverns, or Tap-houses, rather than Churches of God.

That daily duties ought to be performed in Families, see *Mr. Rob. Boultons* Direct. for Walking, p. 244. 249. *Fenners* Catechism, p. 76. *Cobbet* on Prayer, p. 88. *Jer. Dyke* his Epistle Dedicatory to *Philemon*. *Ambrose* his *Medica*. p. 199, &c. *Mr. Philip Goodwin* his Family Duties.

10 Obs. It is not sufficient that we be religious towards God, but we must also be righteous and merciful towards men. It is not enough that we bring our Sacrifices to him every morning, but we must also bring our Tithes to maintain his Messengers, and to succour the poor, the fatherless, and the widow. Many will seeme religious towards God, yet are unrighteous towards men; and others there are that wil seem righteous towards men, and yet are irreligious towards God; both these miscarry and come short of Heaven, the one for his religious-unrighteousness, and the other for his righteous-irreligiousness; the one for his Hipocrisie, the other for his meer Morality and civility. God hates Holiness when it is not joyned with righteousness. He hath redeemed us, that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness; not in holiness or righteousness, the Holy Ghost hath joyned them, and we may not separate them, *Luk. 1. 75.* *2 Pet. 1. 6.* *7. Psal. 115. 2. Tit. 2. 12.* we must practise equity as well as piety, remembring that \* *unrighteousness* is an abomination as well as *ungodliness*. Ministers have a right to their maintenance both *in foro poli*, & *in foro soli*, both by Gods Law, and mans Law (as I have elsewhere proved at large) and he that robs them, robs not men, but God. 2 For

\* See more in  
my Com. on  
2 Tim 3. 3.  
p. 81, 82.  
*Sal Terra*. cap. 8

3 For Mercy to the Poor, there is scarce any Duty more pressed upon us in the Scripture, with precepts and presidents, (*Dan. 15. 7. 10. Luke 6. 36.*) What promises and rewards are made to the merciful? and what heave curses are denounced against the unmerciful and cruel man? Hee shall have judgement without mercy that shewes no mercy, *Jam. 2. 13.* as he stops his

He that wants mercy of mercy shall miss,  
But he shall have mercy that merciful is.  
*Aspiciunt oculis superi mortalia iustis,*  
*En eget auxilio qui non tulit.*  
Ovid. Meta. Lib. 13.

*Dan. 4. 27. 8.*  
*Math. 5. 7. 8.*

ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry, and shall not be heard, *Prov. 21. 13.* Dives that shewed no mercy to Lazarus, at last had none himself; and if they be accounted Murderers who doe not relieve the poor, what are those that oppress them, and grind their faces? the Lord hath a quarrel and controversie with such as shew no mercy, *Hos. 4. 1. Amos 2. 6, 7.* such penuriousness is the way to Poverty, *Prov. 11. 24.* There is that spares more than is meet, and it tends to poverty. The way to increase Corn is not to keep it in the Bag, but to sow it. The curse of the Poor lights upon the cruel, (*Prov. 28. 27.*) and brings a curse upon their Children, (*Psal. 109. 12. 16.*) Let none pity his fatherless Children, why so? because he remembered not to shew mercy to the poor.

*Ovidisti si non pavisti. Ambro.*

Let Sodomites be cruel and merciless (*Ezek. 16. 49.*) and Heathens that know not God (*Romans 1. 30.*) but let us that are Christians resemble Christ our Head, and be merciful as he is merciful, who went up and down doing good, to the souls and bodies of men, and whose usual saying was, *It is a more blessed thing to give than to receive,* *Acts 20. 35.* Hee was even compounded of love and compassion, and became poor, that wee thorow his poverty might bee made rich, *2 Cor. 8. 9.*

See ten dissimilatives from unmercifulness in Mr. Green-bill on *Ezek. 16. 49.* p. 297, 298 &c.

To encourage you to a merciful frame of spirit, in a time when mercy is almost fled out of the world, take these following Considerations.

1 By this we shall evidence our Election and Sanctification, *Col. 3. 12.* Put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies; Doe not only give an Almes, but give it with a compassionate heart, and tender affection; this will make us like the elect children of God, who are all in their generation liberal, bountiful men, according to their several abili-

abilities, they are such as *devise liberal things*, *Isay. 32. 8.* Job *was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame*, Job 29. he never did eate his moriel alone, *Job 31. 20.* David describing the godly man, makes this one Character of him. that he is gracious, full of compassion, disperfeth to the poor, shewes favour, and lends, *Pfal. 112. 4. 5. 9.* Paul how oft doth he command, and commend such as did administer to the necessities of the poor Saints? *Dorcas* cloathed the poor with those garments which she made of her own cost in her life time; *Zachem* when he was converted, gave the one half of his goods to the poor, *Luke 19. 8.* it is not *I will* give at my decease, when I can keep them no longer, but it is in *presenti*, *I doe give.* 2. Not of another mans goods, but of *mine own.* 3. Not to the rich, but to *the poor.* 4. Not a penny, but *the one half of my goods*, do I give to the poor. See how grace enlargeth the heart, and loosenerh it from earthly things; yea I have read of the *Turks*, that once a year the *Bashaws* and great men have their whole estates cast up by their Stewards, and they give the tenth part yearly to charitable uses; if this be true, how will these Infidels rise in Judgement against most Christi-  
ans.

2 Consider that it is *a service and sacrifice* well pleasing unto God, *Phil. 4. 18. Heb. 13. 16.* Hence it is that the Lord so oft calls for it, and in some cases, prefers *Mercy* before Sacrifice, *Hof. 6. 6.* Learning and Valour may make a man admired, but it is humility and bounty that makes us best beloved.

*Homines nulla  
repropius ad  
Deos accedunt  
quam dando.  
Cicero.*

*Regis, crede  
mihi, res est suc-  
currere lapsis,  
imò divina res  
est Tanto, ali-  
qua virtus est*  
1. 30. Art. 4.

3 This will make us like unto God, then are we men after his own heart, when we are merciful as our heavenly Father is merciful, and good as he is good; not by way of *Equality*, but by way of *Analogy* and similitude, according to our degree and measure, *Mat. 5. 45.* now the more like unto God we are, the more he loves us, for similitude is the ground of love.

*melior, quanto facit hominem Deo similiorem. Aquinas secunda secunda,*

4 Hereby wee bring must glory to God, *Joh. 15. 8.* As hee that oppresseth the poor, despiseth him that made him; so hee that pitieth the poor, honours him that made him,  
for

for God takes the kindness done to them as done to himself,  
*He that gives to the poor lends to the Lord.*

5 It is one chief end why the Lord gives us riches, viz. that wee might be his Almoners to succour the poor; he could feed them and cloath them without our help, but he hath ordained that there shall be Poor always with us, to try our bounty, love, and pity, and to manifest it unto the world, *Joh. 12. 8.* it is Gods Corn and Wine that we enjoy, it is his blessing and free bounty that hath made us rich, when others are poor; all that we have comes from him: and it is of his own that we give unto him, *1 Chron. 29. 14, 16.* if hee have given us *pounds*, we may well give *pence* by way of thankfulness to his poor afflicted ones; else, he that hath raised us can as easily ruine us, and strip us naked as in the day that wee were born. Let us put our selves in the poor mans case, if we our selves were poor and in distress, wee would think it the rich mans duty to succour us. As yee would have others should doe to you, so doe you to them; for with what measure you mete to others, it shall be meted to you again.

6 *All Profession, Duties, Gifts, and Graces, without this are but counterfeit.* Hence St. James placeth all religion as it were in this duty of Mercy, *Jam. 1. ult.* not that this is the life or form of other Graces (as Papists vainly) but it is a sign and evidence of the truth of other graces, even as breathing and acting is a sign of living. He that saith he hath all Gifts, and yet hath not Love, is but as sounding Brass, or a tinkling Cymbal, a meer noyse and nothing else, *1 Cor. 13. 1.* hence Christ commands us rather to sell what we have and give to the poor, than be wanting to our selves or others in this duty, *Luk. 12. 33.* so did Barnabas, that Son of consolation, when the Church wanted, he sold his Land to succour it (*Acts 4. 36, 37.*) not that we are bound alwayes to sell our Land for pious uses, but if the Church of God should come to that distress, that either we must succour it, or else it will sink, then is a time to part with all. As Lot would have parted with his Daughters to save his Guests; so should wee part with our estate to save Gods people from perishing; and if Drunkards to satisfie their lust, will sell their Lands in the Devils service, much more should we to glorifie God, part with our Land and estate to glorifie God the giver of them.



Mr. Jam's Ser. on  
Isa. 5. 7. P. 9.  
25. 11. &c. P.  
19. 10.

7 It shall be fully rewarded. God hath a Book of remembrance, wherein he registers all we doe for him and his, *Mat. 10. 5. Heb. 6. 10.* even to a cup of cold water, all shall be rewarded, *Matth. 10. u't.* Hee cannot bee a toser who hath made God his Debtor, *Hee that giveth to the poor lends to the Lord, and that which he hath given he will pay him again, Prov. 19. 17.* Hee is the best Pay-master, none more able, none more willing to recompence any service that is done for him, or his.

1 He shall have Temporal rewards, *Prov. 11. 24.* There is that scattereth and is more increased, and he that watereth others, shall be watered himself. This is the best means to preserve our estate, *Isa. 32. 8.* The liberal man deviseth liberal things; and by it he is established. He that honours the Lord with his riches, shall have his Barns filled with plenty, *Prov. 3. 9, 10.* Mercy and Truth shall be to them, *Prov. 14. 22.* God will bless his Trade and Calling, *Deut. 15. 10.* and make his little, increase unto a thousand. Charity is the best Policy, for by helping others we benefit our selves, *Job 29. 13.* As the Poor had *Jobs* Almes, so he had the benefit of their Prayers, and fared the better for them. That which is well laid out, is best laid up; a diligent hand, and a distributive heart make a man truly rich, such giving is getting, such bounty is the way to plenty, and a godly liberality is a prevention of poverty; he that gives to the Poor hath Gods promise (which is sure pay) that he shall not want, *Prov. 28. 27.* Give and it shall be given to you again, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over (*Luke 6. 38.*) see what a heap of expressions the Holy Ghost here useth, to assure us of a full reward of all our labour of love. He saith not barely, \* Give, and it shall be given you; but 1. You shall have good measure, i.e. just measure according to your gift, given to you again. 2. You shall have it pressed down, light things wee use to press down to make good measure. 3. Yet more, shaken to-

Vis ditari? a-  
micum habeas  
Deum: & om-  
nium ditissimus  
eris.

\* Quadruplex  
bonum datur à  
Deo. 1. Bona fortune, ut divitiae, hae di-  
suntur bona mensura. 2. Bona natura, ad  
qua refertur mensura conferita. 3. Bona  
gratia, quod spectat mensura coagitata. 4. Bo-  
na gloria, quo spectat mensura superfluens.  
Stella in locum.

gether; as Corn that goes closer together by shaking. 4. This is not all, for as if all that he had spoken had not been sufficient, he adds, you shall have it running over. Now, a mea-  
sure

sure will run over as long as you pour; there is no stint, no bounds to that gift, which shall be given running over. A Vessel will run over continually, pour as long as you will.

5. Yet more, all this shall be given you *into your bosom*; that is, you shall be made sensible of the sweetness, and experimentally find the goodness and greatness of your reward. This work is wages, and like *Sampsons* Lion, it carries Hony in the belly of it; it is no spending, but lending; no laying out, but a

\* laying up of treasure in Heaven, above the reach of Theeves and Pyrats, *Matth. 6. 19.* Men are all for gain, why this is the best gain: by parting with *Temporals* to get *Eternals*, *Luke 16. 9.* Hence the Apostle calls the *Macedonians* *Almes* by the name of *Fruit*, *Rom. 15. 28.* *Phil. 4. 17.*

I desire not a gift, but I desire *fruit* that may further your account. Wee pleasure not the poor so much by our giving, as we profit our selves by their receiving. Hence in *Italy* their ordinary form of Begging is, *Eate ben pro voi, Doe good for your own sakes.* Christ that fed five thousand, could also have fed himself and his followers without any help; but hee would be releaved by others, that so their faith and love might be made more apparent and resplendent to the world, *Luke 8.*

2, 3. *Joh. 4. 7.*

2 Thou shalt be blest in thy *Body* with health, or if sickness doe surprize thee (as all things come alike to all) yet God will make thy bed in thy sickness, and comfort thee upon thy bed of languishing, *Psal. 42. 2, 3.*

*Non memini me legisse malā morte mortuum, qui libenter opera charitatis exerceat; habet enim multos intercessores.*  
*Hier. on. ad Nepotian.*

3 In thy *Name*, *Hezekiah* and his kindnesses are commended to posterity, *2 Chron. 32. 32.* *Phebe* and *Onesiphorus* are commended on this account: such are an ornament to their Profession, and amiable in the eyes of all, *Rom. 5. 7.* for a righteous man one would scarcely dye, but for a good man one would even dare to dye. A Man of a severe innocency is hated, rather than loved, but a good and bountifull man wins so upon the hearts of men, that they would even dye for him; scarcely will a man dye for a righteous man, who is only fair and just in his dealings, but for a good man, that hath been mercifull and pitifull to others, and hath done much

good in his life, some may venture their lives for him.

4 In thy *Posterity*, such as have shewed mercy to others, God will raise up some that shall be mercifull to theirs. Hence *Cyprian* was wont to say, *This more children the more charity should be used*; for as Wells by drawing, spring more freely, so our substance increaseth by bounty, and is blest to our posterity.

5 Blest in *Soul*, we shall have light in darkness, peace in trouble, audience in Prayer, &c. *Isa. 58. 7, 8. 10, 11.* if thou deal thy bread to the hungry, &c. *then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer thee*; and though we be sick and silent, yet works of mercy cry aloud in Gods eares for us; they have a vertual and vital, though not a vocal call; *Job 31. 20. The very loyns of the poor shall bless us*, even when we are sleeping in our beds, yet then are they pleading for us. Hereby wee evidence our election, and lay up a good foundation for the time to come; though Christ alone be the *foundation fundamental*, yet good works may be a *foundation evidential*, 1 Tim. 6. 19. 1 Job. 3. 14. *Obadiah* proved that hee truly feared God, because he hid the persecuted Prophets of God, and fed them in a time of danger.

See Mr. Ja-  
combs Ser. on  
Mat. 5. 7.

6 Thou shalt be *eternally blessed*, *Psal. 41. 1. Prov. 14. 21. Mat. 5. 7. & 25. 34, 35.* it is the way to the Kingdom, though not the meritorious cause of reigning there. This will help to loosen our affections from the earth, wee must shortly part with all these things below, now our parting with them before hand to pious uses, will make our last parting with them more easie to us, as the Apostle said, *I dye daily*; his daily trials were as so many petty deaths unto him: so our daily giving will make us daily see the vanity of these things, and make our affections dye to them. The way to Heaven, it is an high, hard, long way, it is up-hill; and wee had need to unburden our selves of this thick clay. When one asked a good man why he gave away his money so freely, his answer was, *ut levius ascenderem sculum Jacobi*.

Thus we see there is no loss in Works of Mercy, as the unmercifull, unbeleeving world imagineth, for one penny we give we shall have that as will be equivalent to many. Hence bounty to the Poor is called *sowing of seed*, 2 Cor. 9. 10. the Husband-man for one Seed that he sowes hath twenty, thirty, forty, &c. or more, again.

a Though

2 Though the Seed be hidden with Clods for the present, and seeme to dye, yet at \* last it ariseth again with great increase to the Sower, ( *Eccles. 11. 1, 2.* )

3 As men sow so shall they reap, if they sow sparingly they shall reap sparingly, if liberally they shall reap liberally.

4 The Husband-man doth not sow all his Seed in one place, but some here, some there ; so wee must disperse our charity, and give a portion to seven, and also unto eight.

5 The only way to preserve our Corn is to sow it, for if it be kept in our Barns, and Garners, it rots and perisheth ; but if it be cast into a fit ground it multiplies. Riches are lost by keeping, and kept by spending on the poor ; and if Idolaters will lavish gold out of the Bagge, and spend their choyssest treasures on Idols and Images, and if the *Israelites* could part with their Gold and Ear-rings, to an Idol that could not help them, nor thank them ( *Exod. 32. 3.* ) then surely we should spend freely on the living Images of Christ, especially since they can help us by their Prayers, and glorifie God in the use of that we give them ; Let us therefore abound in this work of the Lord, for as much as wee know our labour is not in vain in the Lord. How abundantly was the *Shunammite's* kindness to the Prophet *Elisha* recompensed ? 1. By the gift of a Son after long barrenness. 2. By restoring her Son to life again ( *2 King. 4. 16.* ) 3. By fore-warning her of a famine approaching ( *2 King. 8. 1. 4.* ) 4. By directing her to the King, in such a season that she recovered her Land ; so good it is to have an interest in the Prayers, and affections of Gods Messengers.

This Duty though excellent, yet meets with much opposition ; though it be well-pleasing to God, yet it is unpleasant to most men ; which hath made them invent so many shifts and excuses to save their purses. As,

1 Obj. *I have a Family, a Wife, Children, Servants, and Kindred to provide for, &c.*

Ans<sup>r</sup>. 1. Wicked men are called absurd, unreasonable men ( *2 Thes. 3. 2.* ) and not without reason, for see what illogical Logick they here produce ; because men have Families to provide for, therefore they cannot, or rather, they will not do good to any other. We read of many that had great Families, and yet were very merciful men, as *Abraham, Job, David.*

*Misericordia  
comes defun-  
ctorum, Thy  
good works  
will follow  
thee to heaven,*  
*Rev. 14. 13.*

*Habeo quod de-  
dis, perdidisti,  
quod servavi.*  
*Epitaph.*

The *Macedonians* had Families to provide for, yet they relieved others beyond their ability (2 Cor. 8. 3.) though they had but little themselves, yet out of that little they were willing to give somewhat.

I have read of one *Mistress Owen* of *Islington* that had two and twenty Children, yet in her life-time shee built an Hospital, and gave fifty pound *per annum* to it; shee built a Free-School, and gave a good stipend to it, and gave two thousand and five hundred pounds to other pious uses. The Lord *Hearington* had but one thousand pound *per annum* (which was but a mean estate to maintain a Lord and his followers) yet out of that hee spared one hundred pound *per annum* for pious uses.

2 By discreet giving, you provide Gods blessing for your Children, which is the best portion, *Psal.* 112. 2, 3, 5. 6. as you have succoured others, so God will raise up some to succour yours; *David* speaking of his own experience, tells us, that he never saw the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging their bread, *Psal.* 37. 25. such giving is no hindrance to us or ours, but brings a blessing on what we have. Hence the Lord commands his people, to leave some gleanings for the fatherless and the widow; Why so? That God may bless thee in the work of thy hands, *Deut.* 24. 19, 20. all thy carking and caring is but lost, if God give not his blessing; many have scraped abundance of pelf together for a prodigal Heir, that hath in a trice consumed all. Men know not who shall bee their Heirs, the riches of the wicked are laid up for the just, yea many times a mans enemies have been his heirs.

3 Many are single, and have no Families to provide for, and yet are as hide-bound to any pious uses as any others; and therefore this is but a meer pretence and fig-leaf to hide their miserable mindes withall.

2 Obj. I have nothing to give but what I get by my labour?

Ans. The Apostle expressly commands such to give, *Ephes.* 4. 28. Hast but a farthing? give that; the poor Widow that had but two mites, which make a farthing, is commended by him, who looks not so much at the gift, as at the good will of the giver, *Mark* 12. 41, 42, 43. if we have but an handful of Meal, and a little Oyl, yet Gods *Elijahs* must be relieved

See Master Ja.  
mbs Sermon  
Mat. 5. 7. Ps. 25.  
&c.

ved with it, 1 King. 17. 12. All that doe not receive should give, the Servant, the Day-labourer, the Artificer, &c. should spare somewhat for the poor, the Servant that hath none to maintain but himself, may better spare somewhat for the poor than many House-keepers.

2 If God have not given thee ability to doe good, yet if thou hadst means wouldst thou bee liberal? why then know, *Deus coronat voluntatem ubi non invenit facultatem.* Aug. that if there be in thee a willing mind, God will accept of the will for the deed, and of the Affection, where there is no ability for present Action; and if thou hast nothing else, yet *Da lachrymalam*, give a tear.

3 Obj. The Poor have many faults, they are lewd, and Lasse, unworthy, and unthankful, and can scarce afford us a good word for all that we doe for them?

Ans. And hast thou none? Poor folks faults are easily seen, but men may see greater (if they will) in their Accusers, as Pride, Prodigality, Malice, Cruelty, Hard-heartedness, &c. It is the Poor, and not the sins of the Poor that they hate, for they can love Rich men that have worse sins in them than the poor have, Now, true hatred is against the whole kind, he that truly hates sin as sin, hates it where-ever he sees it, be it in the rich as well as in the poor, so that this is but a pretence to save their money.

2 Grant that they be unthankful, disobedient, &c. yet are not we so unto God? now if God feed us, though wee walk disingeniously towards him, why should we harden our hearts against our poor brother?

3 We give, *Non homini sed humanitati, non peccatori sed pauperi*, We give not to the wicked man, to uphold him in his wickedness, but to supply his present wants.

4 Though their tongues should curse thee, yet their loyns will bless thee, *Job 31. 20.*

5 It is for Pharisees to look for the praise and thanks of men here, Gods people must look for their reward in heaven. This is our Seed-time, and though our Seed bee now buried, yet then it will arise: and though men thank us not now, yet then we shall have thanks before Men and Angels, our secret love and obedience shall have open acknowledgement and recompence, Christ himself will bee our Encomiast then, *Mat. 25. 34, 35, 36.*



6 Their unthankfulness hurts themselves, not us; it is their sin, not thine. Wee must not say in our duty because they doe in theirs: Another mans Sin will not excuse mine. We may not be uncharitable because they be unthankful.

7 It is a good sign that our charity is sincere, when wee can give to those that revile us, and behave themselves unthankfully towards us. To give to those that give to us, Heathens will doe so; but to blese such as curse us, and feed such as hate us, and so overcome evil with good, this is truly Christian, *Rom. 12. 21.*

8 Suppose they be wicked, yet giving may better them, and thy kindness may melt them, and heap coals of fire upon their heads. The way to break a Flint is to lay it upon a soft pillow, *Rom. 12. 20.*

9 Though some poor people be wicked and unthankful, yet all are not so, we may not therefore punish all for the fault of some.

4 Obj. *I see many rich men give little or nothing, and therefore why should I give?*

Ans. 1. Few rich men are saved, Not many mighty, not many noble; some, but not many great men, are good men. We must therefore live by Rule, not by Example, especially of rich cormudgeons, who had as leive part with their blood as part with a penny to a pious use. Now the rule is, that all who are of ability should give, and shew compassion to their brethren, *Zech. 7. 9. 1 Cor. 16. 2. Let every one lay aside somewhat for the poor, as God shall prosper him, the command is universal, without exception or restriction. Rich men indeed, who abound with worldly goods, and have not only for necessity, but variety and superfluity, those have a strict and severe charge given them, to be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate (1 Tim. 6. 17, 18.) now some rich men are rich in good works, as Abraham, Job, Zacharias, Cornelius, &c. and if you will needs follow rich men, follow the best, and honour the Lord with thy riches, and doe good with thy goods, remembring how uncertain they bee, (1 Tim. 6. 17.) they have wings, not of a Sparrow, but of an Eagle to fly aloft from us, Prov. 23. 5. improve them therefore to spiritual advantages whilst you have them, for as the ungodly poor are the most miserable, because they are doubly*

παράγγελλε  
præcipe, denun-  
tis, Com-  
mand and  
charge them  
in the name of  
the most High,  
&c.



doubly poor, both in soul and body; so merciful rich men are most happy, because they are doubly rich, viz. in wealth and good works. Besides, God hath given the poor a kind of interest in the rich mans store, *Non jus proprietatis, sed charitatis*, Hee hath a share in them though he may not be his own carver, *Prov. 3. 27, 28.* With-hold not good from him to whom it is due; that is, from thy poor Brother. When thou seest any in greater necessity than thy self, thou must to thy power succour them. The *Macedonians* themselves were but poor, yet when the Church was in distress, they gave beyond their ability. Many have been poor in goods, yet rich in good works; Christ himself in respect of Temporal riches was poor, he had not a house of his own to dwell in (*Matth. 8. 20.*) no Lands nor Livings, yet was he mindful of the poor, and gave bountifully to them, for he had a bag to succour the poor withall, *Joh. 13. 29.* The poor Widow gave all her substance, and is highly commended for it, for God looks not so much at the gift as the sincerity of the giver; hence shee is said to have given the greatest gift, 'because she gave it out of an enlarged, liberal heart; others gave out of their superfluity, but she out of her penury gave all that shee had, and so rested solely and singly upon the Promise; *John Baptist* commandeth him that hath two Coats, not only he that hath four or five, to part with one to the poor, *Luke 3. 11.* yea our Saviour calls sometimes for a cup of cold water, which puts us to no cost of heating (*Mat. 10. 41.*) which takes off all excuses whereby men would exempt themselves from giving.

*Divitis super-  
flua pauperi  
sunt necessaria,  
aliena retinet,  
qui illa tenet.  
Aug. in Ps. 147*

*In dando, ani-  
mi qualitas po-  
tius spectatur,  
quam elemosy-  
nae quantitas.*

5 Ob. *I pay my Assessments to the Poor, and what would you have me doe more?*

*Ans.* The vilest of men pay what the Law compells them to give, but Gods people must do more than others. There are many modest poor House-keepers which have more need then many which the Law provides for; we must not therefore confine our selves to the Law, but as occasion requires, we must lend freely, help to redeem Captives, to raise poor men that have losses by fire, shipwrack, or that have a great charge of children; we must help to train up poor ingenious Children in Learning, and honest poor Couples that marry in the Lord, &c.

6<sup>th</sup> Obj. *I must provide against old age, sickness, &c.*

*Ans.* True, in a moderate way you must do so, as *Joseph* in the years of plenty did lay up against times of scarcity. But to provide excessively by Usury, cruelty, and unmercifulness to the poor, this is to provide a Curse for thy self, and not a blessing. By this means thou deprivest thy self of Gods provision; for as when we revenge our selves, God will not plead our Cause, so when we cark and care, and think by our own excessive, dissidential providing to help our selves, we undo our selves, for God will leave us to our selves.

7<sup>th</sup> Obj. *Wee pity the Poor, and love them, we never took any thing from them?*

*Ans.* *Dives* who is now in Hell did not rob *Lazarus*, but because hee did not relieve him he was damned; so those reprobrates, *Mat. 25* 42, 43.

See many more  
Cavils answer-  
ed in Mr. Ber-  
nard of Bat-  
combes Trea-  
tise of Char-  
ity, chap. 24.  
p. 434. and  
Mr. Capel on  
Tentat. Part. 3.  
Sect. 8. 319,  
&c.

2 Many doe hate the Poor, and tyrannize over them, and if there be so much love in their hearts, how comes so little to appear in their lives. He that hath a loving heart will have a bountiful hand, for love is bountiful, *1 Cor. 13. 4.* it is in vain to boast of love unless we shew it in our works, *Jam. 3. 16. 1 Joh. 3. 17, 18.*

Now did men but consider who it is that asks, and what an honour it is to be his Almoners, and what profit comes by so doing, they would never excuse themselves as they doe, from this eminent duty.

We therefore that are the *Ministers* of Christ, observing the backwardness of our people to this necessary duty, should get the words of the wise, which are as Goats to rouse men out of their security; neither is it sufficient that wee only preach and press the duty, but we must (in our spheres and places) see that those precepts be put in practice according to the mind of Christ; the Deacons and Collectors must gather it, yet the Minister by counsel and advice should see to the right distributing of it. Hence the Apostles call upon *Paul* to remember the poor, which thing (saith he) I was diligent to doe, *Gal. 2. 10.* neither is it sufficient that wee direct our people, but by our *Practice* also we must lead them the way; so did *Paul*, himself did minister to the Saints at *Jerusalem*, (*Rom. 15. 25, 28.*) he doth not put off the duty to others, but himself leads them the way. People look more what wee doe,

doe, than what we say. Then we may preach and press it with more zeal and confidence on others, when we our selves doe goe before them in the duty, else they will quickly upbraid us, with a *Thou that teachest another to be merciful, art thou unmerciful*? Hence the best of men only have been the greatest pressors and promoters of this duty. How oft doth *Solomon* the wisest of men, by Precepts and Promises quicken us to this duty, *Prov.* 11. 24. & 19. 17. & 21. 9. & 28. 27. *Eccles.* 11. 1, 2. and Christ himself, a greater than *Solomon*, did both by Precepts, Promises, and Practice, incite his Disciples to this duty, *Matth.* 5. 7. 42. & 19. 25. & 25. 34, 35. *Luke* 11. 42. & 12. 33. *Acts* 20. 35. How oft did *Paul* press this duty upon the People in all his Epistles, *1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2. & 2. 8. 7. & 9. 5. *Heb.* 6. 10. & 13. 16. ? and gives a strict charge to *Timothy* (*1 Tim.* 6. 17, 18.) that he charge those that are rich, to be rich in good works. And the ancient *Fathers* the better to excite their people to works of Mercy, have written whole Books in the praise of it.

But since God looks more at the *manner* than *matter* of our duties, and loves Adverbs (as *Austin* hath it) better than Adjectives, hee looks not so much *quam bonum*, how good the thing is, as *quam bene*, how well we doe it. I shall therefore give some directions for the right performance of it; for, *Modus rei cadit sub precepto*, God hath prescribed the *manner*, as well as the *matter* of our duties, according to that old saying,

*Est modus in dando, quid, cur, cui, quomodo, quando.*

Now he that will give *Rightly*, must

- |      |   |   |              |
|------|---|---|--------------|
| Give | { | 1 | Beleevingly. |
|      |   | 2 | Cheerfully.  |
|      |   | 3 | Righteously. |
|      |   | 4 | Sincerely.   |
|      |   | 5 | Speedily.    |
|      |   | 6 | Sensibly.    |
|      |   | 7 | Largely.     |
|      |   | 8 | Discreetly.  |
|      |   | 9 | Constantly.  |

1 VVe must give *beleevingly*, for without faith it is impossible to please God; our persons must please before our per-

performances can be acceptable, God had first respect to *Abel*, and then to his Offering: A wicked man may give an Almes, and doe an act which is materially good, but as it comes from him who is in rebellion against God, it is odious to him; for *the sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord*. To make an action Morally good, three circumstances must concur. 1. The man must be *righteous*, he must have both an imputed and imparted Righteousness. 2. He must doe righteous things. 3. He must doe them righteously. *Hee must be a Believer, that will be a right Almes-giver*, for it is not the Almes of every one, but of a \*believing *Abraham, Job, Zachens, Barnabas, &c.* that is pleasing unto God. 2. Get faith to *believe the Promises*. God hath made many precious Promises to the merciful, it is meer unbelief that makes men question the truth of them, and this distrusting of God is the very root of all that unmercifulness that is in the world; if men did but believe that for one corn which they sow they should have an hundred, and that if they give rightly to the poor they should never lack, men would not sow so sparingly as they doe; get faith in the Promises, and this will loosen your hearts from these low enjoyments. Hee is rich who hath interest in the Promises, though hee hath nothing else in the world, for they are virtually every thing, they are better than money in our Purses, or bread in our Cupboards. Shall the Husband-man Plow, and Sow, in hope of a doubtful Crop, and the Merchant venture thorow many dangers at Sea, for uncertain Riches; and shall not wee venture to give, who are promised a sure reward?

\* See Mr. Watson's Plea for Almes, p. 61

2 Cor. 9. 7.

2 Give *cheerfully*; God loves a cheerful giver, hee prefers the willingness of the mind, before the worthiness of the gift, 2 Cor. 8. 11, 12. we must be *ready to distribute, willing to communicate*. Rom. 12. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Free-will-offerings are most pleasing to God. that is the best Honey which flows from the Comb without crushing, and the best Wine which comes from the Grape with least pressing. We should rejoyce when God calls us to works of Mercy, and honours us so farre as to be his Almoners upon earth; when men give grudgingly, and unwillingly, and give *Panem lapidosum*, a bit and a knock, they loose their almes. Unwilling obedience is no obedience, it must not be forced from us by Law, but flow from

*Si panem dede-  
ris tristis, &  
panem & pra-  
mium eris disci-  
pulus.*  
Aug.

from

from love, we must not only *doe* mercy, but *love* mercy, *Micha* 6. 8. Love is a bountiful affection, it thinks it can never *doe* enough for the party beloved; it is the weight which sets all the wheels of the Soul on going. When *David* had set his affections on God, then he thinks all the thousands that he gives to be as nothing, *1 Chron.* 29. 3. Many give, but it is with much calling upon, and importunity, it should come like water from a Spring, freely and fluently, and it comes like fire from a flint, with much knocking; it comes from them as if you pluckt a Rib, a Leg, or an Arm from them. They should speak comfortably to the poor, and they give them hard words, and ugly looks, and so marre all.

3 Give *Righteously*; as we must love Mercy, so wee must *doe* justly, *Micha* 6. 8. we must give of our own goods justly gotten, not by oppression, theft, usury, &c. it must bee *Thy* bread (*Eccles.* 11. 1.) and not stollen from others by any indirect courses, *God hates \* robbery for burnt-offerings*, *Isa.* \* See Dyle on

61. 8. wee may not rob *Peter* to cloath *Paul*, but if thou wilt honour the Lord, let it be with *thy* own riches, *Prov.* 3. 9. so did *Zachew*, the one half of *my* goods, not of another mans doe I give to the poor, *Luke* 19. 8. *Job* warms the poor with the fleece of *his owne* flock, *Job* 31. 20. Goods ill gotten call for *Restitution*, not for *distribution*. Our Almshouses must be not only Works of Mercy, but also of \* Righteousness. Hence works of mercy are frequently called *Righteousness*, (*Psal.* 112. 9. *Prov.* 11. 18. *Dan.* 4. 27.)

not only because it is just and righteous that we should part with some of our wealth to the poor, but also because it must be given of goods rightly gotten, and therefore those cruel men that rack Tenants, and inclose Commons to themselves, that oppress the Poor, and then when they dye build them an Almshouse; that steal the Goose, and then stick down a Feather; both they and their gifts are an abomination to the Lord.

4 *Sincerely*; not for any by or base ends, of Pride, Vain-glory, Merit, or to be seen of men, but singly and sincerely that God may be glorified, *Matth.* 5. 16. & 6. 1. to 5. it is

\* Minuitur census, sed augetur iustitia; laudas mercatorem qui vendit plumbum, & acquirit aurum, & non laudas mercatorem qui erogat pecuniam & acquirit iustitiam? Illud minuitur quod valetur us, illud augetur quod in eternum possidetur es. Aug. in l. fal. 111.

An act that is  
materially good,  
yet may bee  
formally evil, if  
not rightly cir-  
cumstantiated.

See Willets Sy-  
nopsis, Pap.  
contro. 19 Q.  
p. 1065. Edit.  
ult.

It nullo  
glorandum est  
quoniam nihil  
est nostrum. Cy-  
prian.

Multa cadunt  
inter calicem  
supremi, la-  
bra.

Gratia ab of-  
ficio quod mo-  
rat tardat abest.

the end that makes or mars an action, it is this that doth de-  
nominate; let the work be never so good, yet if the end bee  
Self, all is lost. The *Pharisees* did much, yet because they  
sought themselves, and not Gods glory, they lost the true re-  
ward. Give secretly, let not thy left hand know what thy  
right hand doth; the more we conceal our almes here, the  
more apparent will they be made at that great Day. Let us  
take no notice what we have given, how much, how oft, or to  
whom; let it content us, that though we forget our good works,  
yet God doth not, but our Father who sees in secret hee will  
reward us openly. Let us therefore give in simplicity of spirit,  
(Rom. 12. 8.) without any thoughts of merit, for what wee  
give is Gods, not ours, it is of his own that we give unto him,  
1 Chron. 29. 14. 16. Heaven is Christs Purchase, and not  
ours, Rom. 6. ult. it is a gift, and what more free than gift?

5 Speedily. A little given in time may doe more good than  
much given afterwards; delay is a kind of denial, and there-  
fore we are commanded to be ready to distribute, and if wee  
can relieve our Brother now, we may not say to him, Goe,  
and come again to morrow, Prov. 3. 28. we know not what  
a day may bring forth, many things fall out between the cup  
and the lip; the man may be dead, or we may be disabled  
for giving. *Croesus* to day, may bee *Iru* to morrow; or the  
man may be put upon some desperate course of stealing, &c.  
when by seasonable giving we might have prevented his ruine.  
We should prevent mens sures with our readines, and not  
cause the eyes of the Widow to fayl with waiting, Job 31. 16.  
as the Sun communicates its Light freely, and God prevents  
us with his blessings, often giving us before we ask (Psal. 21.  
13.) so should we deal with our poor brother.

It is irksome to an ingenuous nature to stand craving and  
begging, and the Gift looseth a great part of its grace when  
we put off the Suppliant with delayes, such deferring, torments  
the soul, and makes it sick, Prov. 13. 12.

They also that put off giving till they dye, are much to bee  
blamed, those are men of good wills, but bad deeds; when  
they can keep their riches no longer, then they will give  
somewhat, not out of love to God, but for fear of Hell; as  
the Merchant doth cast his Goods into the Sea in a storm, for  
fear of drowning.



2 How dost thou know whether thou shalt have a *heart to give*, many that have wanted a hand in their life-time, want hearts when they come to dye, as we see in churthly, hard-hearted *Nabal*, 1 Sam. 25. 37, 38.

It will be our wisdom therefore in our health, and wealth, whilst we have time and opportunity to doe good to all, *Prov.* 3. 27, 28. *Gal.* 6. 10. it is good to make our own hands our own Executors, and our own eyes our own Over-seers; and not leave our substance to be disposed of by those who may sell it, misplace it, and abuse it.

2 Every thing is beautiful in its season, but our life-time is the fittest *season* for giving, whilst wee are full, and have somewhat to give, and whilst our brother wants. Almes is compared to *sowing* (*Psal.* 112. 9.) now the Husband man is very careful to observe the fittest season for the Seeding of his ground. He that puts off his works of charity till death, is like the man that puts off his sowing till Harveit-time, when he should reap. See Mr. Watson on that text.

3 It is more pleasing to God, and a more infallible evidence of a strong faith and assiance in him. God loves those best that trust in him most; now when a man can in his life-time part with his Goods to glorifie God, it is a good sign that he rests only upon Gods Promises and Providence, and not upon Creature-comforts. Let us then imitate the righteous man, who is ever merciful, and lendeth (*Psal.* 37. 26.) a wicked man may be sometimes merciful; or doe an act of mercy, but he is not constant in the duty, but usually puts it off till death; now as late repentance is seldom true, so *Ellelmofyna sera est raro vera*. To quicken men to doe good in their life-time, I shall set down a notable president in our owne times, of one Mr. Jones a Citizen of London, who in his *life-time* gave above seven thousand pound amongst his poor Kindred, and fifty pound *per annum* to a Preacher at *Monmouth*, where he was born, and caused a house to be built there with all convenient necessities fit for a godly Minister. He erected a Free-school there in his life-time, and also built a fair house for the School-master, giving fifty pound yearly to the head School-master, and thirty pound *per annum* to the Usher for ever.

Hee also built an Hospital in the same Town (1610) for twenty



twenty poor people, allowing every one a Gown yearly, and two shillings six pence weekly, and gave about two thousand pound more to finish the work.

By his last Will and Testament hee gave five thousand pound, to be disbursed for the maintenance of a Preacher at *Newland* in *Glocester-shire*, and certain poor in that Parish.

He gave to the Company of *Haberdashers* in *London*, one thousand four hundred pound for the support of the Poor of that company. He left six hundred pound, and a fair house in the City of *London*, to bee distributed amongst the poor Preachers in *England*. He gave to the Hospitalls in *England* five hundred pound. To the poor in *Stoade*, two hundred pound.

To the poor in *Hanborough* one hundred pound.

To the Company of *Haberdashers* by way of thankfulness for their care taken, and to be taken, in the right managing of these acts of charity, he gave a considerable sum.

I have mentioned this at large, to shame the rich men of this age for their coldness, and avernesness to works of Piety. VVhere, oh where shall we find such *Joneses* as this! He gave pounds, we give not pence; he gave thousands, we give not hundreds; hee erected Schools, and Hospitalls, he promoted Preachers, and Piety; when we are ready to pull down all. The zeal and piety of this good man will rise in Judgement against the Luke-warmness, and impiety of the men of this Generation.

See more presidents, in *Willets Synopsis*, Pap. p. 1210. Edit. ult.

See Mr. *Jacombe* his Ser. at the *Spittle*, on Mar. 5. 7. p. 5. 6.

6. *Sensibly and compassionately*, with a tender, pitiful-sympathizing-heart. We must not only pour out our riches, but our souls to the poor, *Isa. 58. 10.* we must have a fight and sence of their miseries within our selves, considering that they are flesh of our flesh, we are all of one and the same blood, *Isa. 58. 7. Acts 17. 26.* as good hands made them as made thee, and as great a price was paid for their Redemption; and though thou mayest be his superiour in *Temporals*, yet he may excel thee in *Spirituals*, in faith, obedience, humility. Great reason therefore that we should put on bowels of mercy, *Colos. 3. 12.* all sorts of mercy, to soul, body, estate; give, lend, visit, cloath, counsel, comfort, and doe all that in us lyes for them, *Colos. 3. 12.* The good Samaritan when he saw the misery of the

the man that fell amongst Thieves, hee took compassion on him, *Luke 10. 33.* *Job* wept for those that were in trouble, and his soul was in heaviness for the poor, *Job 30. 25.* let a man give never so much, if he doe it with an upbraiding, insulting, and not with a compassionate spirit, it is abominable. It is a greater mercy to have a compassionate heart, than it is to give an Almes. A wicked man may give some of his Goods, but a compassionate man gives some of himself. To move compassion in us, 1. Let us put our selves into their cases, and make them our own. 2. Make use of thine *Eyes*, that is one great means to work upon the heart; observe their poor fare, their tattered cloathing, their cold lodging, and feeble bodies. The Samaritan *saw* the Wounded man, and then hee had compassion on him; Christ *saw* the People as Sheep without a Shepherd, and had compassion on them. By this means we shall the better know the necessities of the poor, and how to suit our almes to their wants. This will make us thankful when we see how others lye on Straw, drink Water, want Cloathes to their backs, and bread for their Bellies, &c.

See this Point  
enlarged upon  
by M. *Nehem.*  
*Rogers* in the  
Good Samaritan,  
p. 112, &c.

7 Largely, and liberally. As *Arannah* gave to the King like a King, so should we give bountifully to works of mercy. A mean man must be frugally liberal, a man of an ordinary estate must be moderately liberal, but a rich man must be magnificently liberal, especially in great and extraordinary cases. A Christian must be a man of a more excellent spirit, (*Numb. 14. 24.*) not of a sordid, low, ignoble spirit. Almes is compared to Sowing, which usually is done with a full hand; to encourage us, the Apostle adds a gracious Promise, that if we sow liberally we shall reap liberally, *2 Cor. 9. 6.* we should therefore abound in this work of the Lord. and be merciful, not as *Abraham*, or *Job* were merciful, but as our heavenly father is merciful. Now the Lord abounds in mercy to us, and so should we in our degree to others. We should not confine our Almes to an Easter-day, or a Christmas-Eve, or a Communion-day, but be ready on all occasions for the duty; we should not give a penny, but a portion to the poor, *Eccles. 11. 1, 2.* Cast thy bread; that is, \* all things necessary

\* *Regio, p. 4. rego, colligo, condo. Ad corpus. Consule, castiga, solare, remitte, fer, &c. Ad animum referuntur. Aquas secunda, secunda, q. 32. art. 2. ut ligari.*

for thy poor Brothers support, cast it frankly and freely without grudging or repining at him; but then it must bee *Thy* bread, got by thy lawful labour; cast it on the Waters, that is, upon the Poor, and though it may seem to be lost, as that which is thrown down the River, yet after many dayes wee shall find it. 1. Sometimes in this life we shall have an hundred fold. The *Shunammite* that entertained the Prophet had a Son. The Widow of *Sarepta* by succouring the Prophet had an increase of her Oyl. 2. Sometimes to the Posterity, when the fathers dead, then the Child hath favour shewed him, *Psalms* 112. 3. 3. Sometimes not till the Resurrection, *Luke* 14. 13 we should therefore give a portion to seven, and also unto eight; that is, unto many, for *Bonum quo communis est melius*, the more communicative our goodness is, the better.

Obj. But we know not what evils may come upon us, and therefore we will save? *Eccles* 11. 2.

Sol. Nay therefore give (saith Solomon) whilst thou hast any thing to give, before all be gone, for thou knowest not what evils shall be upon the earth. Sad times may come, and then those that have been bountiful to others, shall finde bounty from others; and as they have meted to others, so God will raise up some to mete unto them again. Wee see the Wheel turns round, and those that have been on the top, as *Bajazet* and *Belisarius*, have been brought to the bottom; we should therefore improve our Talent while we have it, to our Masters praise. God hath much dishonour done him by miserable, unmerciful men; we should helpto take off those dishonours by our pious, merciful, and munificent walking; they instead of giving bountifully, give basely to the poor, mouldy-bread, stinking meat, that one would scarce give to Doggs; yea their horses many times have more and better Corn than poor wanting Christians. If base offerings were abhorred of *Dauids* soul, how much more are such sordid gifts abhorred of Gods soul.

8 *Discreetly*, according to our estate and abilities, and proportionable to our neighbours necessities. Rich men must give like rich men, and poor men must doe as they can. Thus, *Abs* 11. 29. when the godly were in distress, the Church resolves to send them relief according to their ability. We must so give to one, that we doe not disable our selves from giving

*Non debent ef-  
fundi opes, sed  
dispensari. Am-  
bros.*

to others. Though few offend on this hand, yet it is better and safer offending in the excess and giving too much, than too little. The *Macedonians* are commended for giving beyond their ability, *2 Cor. 8. 3.* The *poor Widow* had rather want her self, than bee wanting to others; and in the Primitive times they sold all that they had to supply the Churches necessities, *Acts 2. 45. & 4. 34.* But ordinarily the measure of our almes must be regulated according to our estates; this is to order our affairs with discretion, *Psal. 112. 5.* according to the ability wherewith God hath blest us, we must lay aside somewhat for the poor, *1 Cor. 16. 2.* Divines conclude, that the tenth part of our comings in ought to be set apart, by way of thankfulness for pious uses; upon this account *Jacob* vowed the tenth to God, *Gen. 28. ult.* Hence we read not only of the *Levites Tenth*, but of Tenth for the *Poor*, (*Deut. 14. 28, 29.*) and to these Tenth the text alludes; and if the *Jewes* who had so many Sacrifices to offer, and Tenth to pay, yet must give another Tenth to the *Poor*; shall not wee that are freed from those Ceremonial burdens, be much more bountiful?

2 Wee must be discreet, in respect of *the persons to whom wee give*; though we are bound to give to all that are in extream necessity, *Luke 6. 30. Give to everyone that asketh*, viz. if he be truly in need, and thou art able to releev him. But especially we must succour the *godly poor*, and communicate to the Saints necessities, *Gal. 6. 10.* we must give unto them *Majore affectu & effectu*, with greater love, and greater bounty; *Joseph* shewed kindness to all his Brethren, but *Benjamin* whom he loved had a five-fold mess. Those are near and dear to God, and so they should be to us. They oft meet with hard usage from the world, and therefore we are commanded to supply (what in us lies) their necessities, *Rom. 12. 13.* Next to those our *poor Kindred*, and the poor of our own Town must be releevd, *Deut. 15. 7.* and then *Strangers*, though they be farre distant, *Gal. 2. 10.* yea *enemies*, if they be in want must be fed by us, *2 King. 6. 21, 22. Mat. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20.*

Only such as are lusty, wandring Beggars, that are able to work, but are lazie and will not, wee must take heed of relieving such, unless they bee in extream necessity, and

*Benefaciendum est omnibus, secundum rationem debitam loci & temporis circumstantias. Aquinas secunda secunda, q. 31. art. 2.*

that with admonition. There are two sorts of Poor in the world,

1 Impotent Poor, of Gods making.

2 Impudent Poor, of the Devils making.

*Pasce fame morientem, quia si non paveris occidisti. Ambr.*

1 Impotent poor, when God by Sickness, Fire, Shipwrack, Persecution, great charge of Children, Old age, &c. such poor whose work is done, must bee succoured by us, *Levit. 25. 35.*

2 But Impudent poor, who are talkative, brazen-faced, idle, dissolute, and disordered; correction is the best almes for such as can work and will not. A rod is fittest for the back of such fools.

1 God hath expressly said, *He that will not labour shall not eat*; it is not, he that is sick and cannot, but he that is able and will not labour shall rot and perish, *2 Thess. 3. 10. Prov. 20. 4.*

2 Such as maintain them in this idleness sin against the good Lawes of the Land.

3 Against the Law of Nature, which teacheth every man by his industry to provide for his own.

4 They are Theeves, and eat up that which should maintain the true poor.

5 By a constant relieving of them, you maintain them in their idle trade, harden them in their sin, and so become necessary to all their abominations.

6 The Godly that have been very tender to other kind of poor, yet have been very terrible to these. *Job* that was eyes to the blinde, yet made these to run and hide themselves, *Job 30. 3, 4, 5.* *Paul* condemns them for their disorderly walking, and commands us to with-draw from such, *2 Thess. 3. 6. 10. 14.* They are *the Devils Nursery, and Seminary*, out of which hee chufeth some for Theft, some for Bawds, some for Murderers, and all manner of villany. Hence *Plato* (one of the wisest Heathens) allowed not any Beggars in his conceited Common-wealth, as being a great blemish and dishonour to it.

3 We must be discreet in shunning the causes of Poverty, which disable us from works of Mercy.

The first is *Idleness*, this wasts and consumes the estate, so that in a short time a man cannot help himself, much less others.

thers. Idleness and uncharitableness were *Sodoms Sins*, Ezek. 16. 49. the virtuous Woman is commended for her liberality to the poor, but what enabled her for it, why shee seeks for Wool, and Flax, and worketh willingly with her hands, Prov. 31. 13, 14, 20.

2 *Intemperance*, in eating, drinking, pleasures, and pastimes, &c. when men shall give five pound for a Dogge, ten pound for a Hawk, twenty pound for a Horse, and forty pound spent on a Whore, and hundreds in Drink and Tobacco, when men shall thus make provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts of it, no wonder if such cannot help others, when they have beggered themselves, Prov. 21. 17. & 23. 21.

3 *Familiarity* with lewd Women, the Harlot will bring a man to a morsel of bread, and will quickly root out all a mans increase, Job 31. 12.

4 *Pride*, when ordinary building will not serve, sumptuous building breeds sorry-house-keeping; So pride in Apparel eates up charity; when men have such large *Items* for Silk, for Satten, for Laces, for Ribbands, &c. when men shall carry Woods and Lordships on their backs, no wonder if they have nothing for the poors bellies. As B. *Jewel* complained sometimes, that he had no Benefices to bestow on good men, for *Capon* his Predecessor had devoured them all; so these have nothing for the Poor, for Dr. *Pride* hath devoured all.

5 *Rash Suerthship* hath disabled many, and therefore *Solomon* so oft cautions us against it, Prov. 6. 1, 2, 3. & 11. 15.

9 Give constantly. In the morning let us sow our Seed, and in the evening let us not hold our hand. Let us never bee weary of well-doing, for in due time we shall reap if we faint not; so long as there are poor to be releevd, and we have goods to releevv them withall, we should be distributing amongst them; now the poor we shall have alwaies with us, so long as the world endures, so long the poor shall endure, and therefore we must still be sowing. As God is alwayes succouring us, so should we alwaies be succouring our Brethren. As he renews his mercy to us every morning, so should we renew our bounny; we must ever be following that

which is good, 1 *Thess.* 5. 15. *Job* was addicted to it from his youth, and in his old age he practised it, *Job* 31. 18. As the Husband-man thinks it not sufficient that hee hath sowed his ground in former years, but he continues his sowing to the end of his dayes; so must wee in this Spiritual sowing, our last dayes must be our best dayes, and our works more at the last than at the first, *Revel.* 2. 19. *Constancy* is one ingredient that helps to make an action Morally good: It must be done *Scienter*, *Volenter*, *Constanter*; first we must know our duty, and then perform it cheerfully and constantly; and this serves to distinguish between the charity of the Hypocrite and the godly, the one gives by starts and fits, when the wind of praise, and the weight of profit moves them; but the righteous doth righteously at all times, and that from a Principle of life, and habit of grace within.

Hee that would see more, may peruse *Drexelius De Elenchosyna*, *Tassin on Amendment*, p. 121, &c. *Synopsis Purioris Theolog. Disput.* 37. p. 473. *Trapp* at the end of his Comment on *N. T.* p. 1049. folio, *Clerks Mirrour*, chap. 19. p. 63. folio, *Mr. Wheatly's Poor mans Advocate*, *Dr. Harris on Maeth.* 5. 7. *Perkins Cases of Consc.* lib. 3. c. 5. p. 143. &c. folio, *Church his Treasury*, p. 283. & *Miscellanies*, p. 87. *Byfelds Marrow*, p. 584. *Capel on Tentat.* p. 319. *Mr. John Downams Plea for the Poor.* *Mr. Bernard of Batscombs VVay to Good VVorks*, *Watsons Sermon*, on *Psal.* 112. 9. *Greenhit on Ezek.* 16. 49. & *instar omnium Binchius mellificium Theolog. Loc.* 15. p. 230. *pars* 3a. *Mr. Jacombs Ser.* at the Spittle, on *Mat.* 5. 7.

#### VERSE 5.

*And offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free-Offerings, for this liketh you, O yee Children of Israel, saith the Lord.*

**I**N this Verse the Prophet continues his Sarcasim, and bids the *Israelites* goe on in their superstitious practices, imitating Gods people in their choysiest Sacrifices, viz. in their Eucharistical, Votive, Free-will-offerings; but withall he lets them know, though this please them, yet it displeaseth God, as appears by those several Judgements which hee had already



already laid upon them, and yet further threatens against them.

*Offer a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving with leaven*; q. d. imitate Gods people, who in their Sacrifices of praise did offer leavened bread according to the Law (*Levit. 7. 13.*) so doe yee in the VVorship of your Idols, what Gods people did holily at *Jerusalem* to the true God, that doe yee hypocritically at *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, to your false gods.

Q. *But here a doubt ariseth, whether this people did sin in offering leaven with their Sacrifices of Thanksgiving?*

A. Some learned men conceive they did sin, and that their Sacrificing here with leaven was contrary to the Law, *Levit. 2. 11.* But as learned men on the other side say, they did not sin in so doing; for though the Lord did forbid leaven in other Sacrifices (*Levit. 2. 11.*) yet in Eucharistical and Thank-offerings, as here, they might bring leavened bread, *Levit. 7. 13.* The Lord therefore doth not blame them here for offering with leaven, for himself had so appointed it, and in these external circumstantialia they were very diligent; but the Lord blames them because they offered those Sacrifices of praise which were due to him, to their Idols, and that in the Temple of Idols.

Q. *But why did the Lord forbid leaven in other Sacrifices, and yet command it in Eucharistical ones?*

A. Sundry Reasons might be given.

1 The Lord might enjoyn it, to intimate unto us the due preparation of our hearts before we praise him; for so wee finde *Leaven* to be used, sometimes in Scripture in good part, for the secret working, preparing, and fitting of the Dough for baking, making it rise and heave, which else would bee sad and heave (*Mat. 13. 33.*) so doth Gods Spirit prepare and raise our spirits in love and thankfulness to God for his mercies, *Psal. 108. 1. to 6.*

2 To teach us to temper our joys with sorrow, and in all our approaches to God in this duty, to rejoyce with trembling, *Psal. 2. 11.* Hence the Passover was to bee eaten with sower herbs.

3 Or else to signifie to us his gracious acceptance of our praises, though mixt with the leaven of many infirmities.

4 To mind them (say some) of their deliverance from those

Vide Plinius  
Piscator. in  
Amos 4. 5. in  
Scolisti.

those things which are set forth by leaven, viz. false Doctrin, Hypocritic, Prophaneſs, and the like.

*Proclaime and publiſh the Free-offerings, q. d.* though you bring your Sacrifices to me every morning and evening, according to my Commandement, and though yee offer other Sacrifices on your Feaſtival-dayes, yea and though yee adde to them all Voluntary-oblations, ſolemnized with great pomp and Majeſty; yet all this is but adding ſin to ſin, it is a burden, and an abomination to me, becauſe not done in that place, and by thoſe Priests which I have ordained for that work. Thoſe Voluntary-free-will-offerings we read of, *Levit. 7. 16. & 22. 18. Numb. 15. 3. Dent. 12. 17.* theſe were commanded by Law, and theſe the *Israelites* did imitate.

*Kiru, vocata eccleſiam & cælum populi ad offerendum viſtims & alias oblationes.*

Theſe they did *publiſh and proclaime* by publick authority, with great pomp and ſolemnity, being very curious in Ceremonies, but careleſs in ſubſtantials; yet for the better clearing of this Point, wee muſt know, that thoſe Free-will-offerings were a kind of Peace-offerings for ſome Bleſſings received: of which we finde three ſorts:

Some were  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1 \text{ Eucharistical.} \\ 2 \text{ Votive.} \\ 3 \text{ Voluntary.} \end{array} \right.$

1 Some were *Sacrifices of Thankſgiving* and praiſe, for ſome Bleſſings already received, as recovery from Sickneſs, victory over Enemies, ſucceſs in a Journey; for bleſſings of the Feild, of the Wombe, &c. they were to come to the Holy place, and bring a Bullock, or the like, and offer it as a Sacrifice of Thankſgiving to God, for thoſe mercies received, *Levit. 7. 11, 12, 13.*

2 There were *Votive Sacrifices*, which were joyned with Prayer for a bleſſing upon their undertakings; or as others ſay, for the performance of ſome Vow made upon the obtaining of ſome ſpecial bleſſing from God, *Lev. 7. 16.*

3 The *Free-will-offering* was of meer Devotion, when a man was not tied either by general or ſpecial obligation, (*Levit. 7. 16.*) either of Mercies received, or of the want of any bleſſing; but of Devotion in general, by way of acknowledging Gods goodneſs to them in the general, and teſtifying their deſire of the continuance of his love and favour to them;

them; For this pleaseth you, or, this ye love, O ye Children of Ahabtem, di-  
 Israel, saith the Lord. What the Prophet had spoken before 1-  
 ronically, now he speaks plainly without a Figure, and shews  
 that he did not exhort them to doe such things, but shews  
 what things they delighted to doe, and therefore hee bids  
 them goe on, and take what they get; you love to have it so,  
 but you consider not what will be the end thereof, *Jer. 5. ult.*  
*q. d. This kind of sacrifice may please you, who have made your*  
*own wills your rule, delighting your selves in outward shewes and*  
*Ceremonies; but it is displeasing unto me, though you love to*  
*have it so, yet I hate your doings, and require no such things at*  
*your hands. My Sacrifices I expect at Jerusalem, yet you think*  
*any prophane place will serve turn, you should have consulted my*  
*Law, and my Messengers, and observed what pleased me; but*  
*you have despised my Law, and despised my Messengers, and follow-*  
*ed your own inventions to your own confusion; go on therefore in these*  
*your rebellious practices, and persist.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Hypocrites are very strict in observing outward Ceremonies*  
*and Circumstances, but very negligent in fundamentals and sub-*  
*stantials. They strain at a Gnat, yet swallow a Camel; they*  
*have a form of godliness, but they have not the power of it;*  
*they may have their morning and evening Sacrifices, they*  
*may pay Tithes, bring Eucharistical and Free-will-offerings,*  
*and goe as farre in outward performances as (if not further*  
*then) the people of God, and yet for want of sincerity bee*  
*nothing. Ignorance and impudence, gain, and applause of*  
*men, will carry men a great way. Most mens religion now a-*  
*daies lies in censuring of others, in holding some seemingly*  
*strict Opinions, and high-flown Notions beyond the rule; in*  
*disputing and questioning every thing, but beleevving nothing.*  
*The Scribes and Pharisees, what adoe did they make about*  
*Tything of Mint, and Cummin, and Annise; but the weighty*  
*matters of the Law lay unregarded; these forget that obedi-*  
*ence is better than sacrifice. Thus our perfect Pharisees the*  
*Quakers, how precise seeme they in their words, even beyond*  
*the rule; What adoe doe they make about Pulpits, Hour-*  
*glasses,*

*Vide Dyke on*  
*the Heart, p. 19*  
*& p. 110.*

glasses, Churches, Steeples, Bells, Gownes, Clokes, Laces, Fringes, Hatbands, making of Leggs, Curchies, Tisles of Honour, &c. and yet these Atheistical Libertines, whose Religion is meer Irreligion, make no bones of Blasphemy, Heresie, Lying, Equivocating, Rayling, Witch-craft, &c. God will smite such gross Hipocrites.

2 Obs. *Sacrifices of praise are due only to God.* The Lord was here greatly displeased with *Israel*, for offering their Sacrifices of praise to their Idols, which were due to him. As it was their sin that they spent the silver and the gold which God had given them, in the service of *Baal* (*Hof.* 2. 8.) so to give the calves of their lips (as Praises are called, *Hof.* 14. 2.) as well as the calves of their stalls to Idols, must needs be a God-provoking sin. As all our Blessings come from him, so it is great reason that all our Praises should bee given to him. This hath ever been the practice of the Saints, *Psal.* 56. 12. & 93. 30. 33. & 107. 22. *Jonah* 2. 9. and is oft commanded, *Psal.* 50. 14, 15. *Ephes.* 5. 10.

3 Obs. *God delighteth in Free-will offerings.* The Prayers and Praises that we offer unto God must be voluntary, ingenuous, free, *Exod.* 25. 2. *1 Chron.* 28. 9. *Esa.* 1. 19. *2 Cor.* 8. 12. *Christ* saved us willingly (*Psal.* 40. 6, 7.) and therefore we should serve him willingly; yea the *Angels* which are more noble Creatures than we, yet serve God willingly, *Psal.* 103. 20. we must resemble them, yea the unreasonable creatures delight to serve God, *Psal.* 19. 5.

Compulsive obedience is no obedience; the service wee perform to God must have three ingredients in it, it must bee done *Scienter, Volenter & Constante.*

1 Our service must be reasonable service, for blind obedience is no obedience, *Rom.* 12. 1.

2 It must be performed *cheerfully* and willingly, for as God loves a cheerful Giver, so he loves a cheerful Hearer, a cheerful Prayer, and a cheerful observer of his Sabbaths, *Isa.* 58. 15. It was Prophefied, that in Gospel times Gods people should be *willingnesses* in the abstract and Plural Number, that is, they should bee a prompt People, that are even composed as it were of willingness, so ready should they bee to worship him, *Psal.* 110. 3:

*Populus spontaneitatum, i.e. summum spontaneus. Heb.*

3 It must be *\* constant*, we must not only doe righteous-  
ness at sometimes, but at all times, *Psal. 106. 3.*

*\* See more in  
Mr. Burges's  
Spi. Refining  
1 Part, Serm.*

91. p. 542. See ten Qualifications of Obedience in Mr. William Shepherds Treat, of Sin-  
cerity, p. 198. &c.

4 *Obf. Idolatry is marvellous pleasing to our corrupt natures.*  
Men love to have it so, *Jer. 5. ult.* Corrupt Principles suit  
well with our corrupt hearts. Hence it is that men are said to  
be wedded to their Idols, *Hos. 4. 17.* those *they love and serve, V. weems on*  
*and seek to worship,* *Jer. 8. 2.* this makes multitudes goe after the second  
the Whore with her bewitching, alluring golden Cup, *Revel. Com. chap. 7.*  
*13. 3.* on this side Hell there is not a sorer Judgement, than *p. 85.*  
thus to be given up to our own corrupt affections.

VERSE 6.

*And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your  
Cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have  
yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*

**V**Hen God would convert a People, he useth Bles-  
sings and Curses, Mercies and Judgements, one or  
both of which usually work upon all ingenuous natures, *Levit.*  
*26. Dent. 28. & 30. 1, 2.* God had tried all conclusions up-  
on this people, he had tried to reclaime them by Mercies,  
(*Amos 2. 9, 10, 11. & 3. 2.*) but these being ineffectual, he  
now tries what Judgements will doe; and therefore sends his  
three Arrowes of Famine, Pestilence, and Sword amongst  
them to convert them (if it might be) and not to destroy  
them, as appears by that Emphatical Epistrophe annext to  
every punishment; *yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the  
Lord.* Not only his Mercies, but his Menaces; not only his  
favours, but his frownes and rods were all ineffectual upon  
the hearts of this impenitent people. As a tender father will  
use all means to reclaime his rebellious Son, so God had used  
all means to reclaim this People from their Idolatry, and A-  
postacy, but all in vain, for they were so wedded to their  
lusts, that they had rather lose their Land and Lives than  
part with them; so that this is the third Sin which the Lord

by his Prophet chargeth them withall, viz. *Obstinacy and incorrigibleness*; no cords of love could draw them, nor judgments drive them. The Lord had wasted all his *rods* on them in vain, five or six he mentions here, viz.

- 1 Famine.
- 2 Drought.
- 3 Blasting.
- 4 Mildew.
- 5 Plague.
- 6 Sword.

But they were so farre from returning, that they grew worse and worse, and therefore the Lord resolves to make a final end with them.

In this Verse we have,

1 A Judgement executed, and that is *Famine*, which is Paraphrastically set forth by *cleanness of teeth*, and is exegetically explained in the next Clause, by want of Bread, and provision, *I have given you cleanness of teeth*, what is that? why *want of bread in all places*; when men have nothing to eat, their teeth are clean, nothing adheres to them to foul them. In the precedent Verse the Lord tells us what pleased *Israel*, viz. Sin, and now hee tells us what pleased him, viz. to punish them for their sin; as they had abused their food like fat Beasts, to luxury and riot, so now they should fast for it; and *I also have given you*, or *therefore have I given you cleanness of teeth*; it is a suitable Judgement that unclean hearts and lives should be punisht with, cleanness of teeth. This Judgement was in part fulfilled in *Elijahs* and *Elishaes* dayes, when in *Ahabs* reign there was a three years famine, 1 King. 17. & 18. & 2 King. 6. 25. & 8. 1. and in the dayes of King *Joram*, for the Idolatry that then reigned, 2 King. 4. 38. yet some conceive that the Prophet here speaks of some latter famine which was then fresh in their memories.

2 Here is the *Extent*, or Universality of this Judgement, the famine was not in one or two, but in *all their cities, and in all places*.

3 Here is the effect which this Judgement had upon them, viz. It was ineffectual; yet *have ye not returned to me, saith Lord*. Their hearts were so hardned, and they so indurate in sin, that they were become incorrigible, and incurable; they were

*Est Periphrasis  
famis & in-  
opie.  
The Vulgar  
following the  
Septuagint  
render it Stup-  
orem dentium,  
but corruptly,  
for the word is  
Nikion, & sig-  
nificat mundi-  
tatem & vacui-  
tatem dentium,  
cum dentes va-  
cui sint à cibo.*

were Judgement-proof, no chastning could work upon them. *Yet have ye not, &c.* This yet shewes that there was great reason why God should expect their return, and that hee had done that which in all probability might have caused them to return, when he sent these Judgements on them; therefore God inculcares, and oft repeats this sentence, *Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord*; as being greatly troubled that his corrections had no better operations on them; when even *Phrygians* and *Barbarians* are bettered by blows, yea the dull Ass is quickned by the Rod, and the heaue Oxe by the Goad.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Famine is one Judgement which God sends upon impenitent Sinners*, VVhen God is greatly incensed against a People, then he sends the Famine, which he calls one of his four sore Judgements, *Ezek. 14. 21.* it is an Arrow which he shoots against a People of his wrath, *Ezek. 5. 16.* The Lord can no sooner call for a Famine, but like a faithful Servant it presently obeys, *2 King. 8. 1.* hee called for a Famine, and it came upon the Land seven years, *Psal. 105. 16.* when it comes in extremity it is very sad; hence it is called the terrible Famine, *Lam. 5. 10.* This will appear in seven particulars.

1 It makes men *unnatural*, and cruel, even to their nearest Relations, as Wife and Children. Nature bindes a man to render and pity these, yet in time of Famine, we read of Mothers eating their own Children, *2 King. 6. 28, 29. Jer. 14. 9. Lam. 4. 10.* this Curse the Lord threatens against disobedient ones, *Deut. 28. 53. 56. 57.*

2 It is a *lingring, languishing death*, other Judgements cut men off suddenly, but this consumes a man as it were peece-meal, *Lam. 4. 9.* *They that are slain with the Sword are better than they that are slain with hunger*; Why so? *for these pine away for lack of sustenance.*

3 It makes men faint and feeble, and so unfits men for the Service of God in their calling, *Gen. 47. 13.* they faint by reason of the famine. Hence Bread is called the *staffe, say,* and *strength of our natures* (*Levit. 26. 26. Psal. 105. 16.*



*Isa. 3. 1. Ezek. 4. 16.*) take a Staffe from a weak man and he falls to the ground.

4 It makes men howl and lament (*Hos. 7. 14. Joel 2. 11*) yea rage and be mad, *Isa. 8. 21.*

5 Hunger burns like a fire, which is a most terrible element, it waists the radical moysture, *Dent. 32. 24. Jeremy* describing the Famine in *Jerusalem*, tells us, that their face was black like a Coal, and their skin was black like an Oven, because of the terrible Famine (*Lam. 4. 8. & 5. 10.*) when the *Calor nativus* hath nothing to feed upon, it consumes the *Humidum radicale*, and so the man dyes.

6 It brings Poverty with it, now extreame Poverty is a sore Judgement, and puts men upon desperate attempts, as robbing, killing, &c. *Prov. 6. 30. & 30. 8, 9.* it makes rich men poor, and forceth them to sell their Land, Cattel Goods, Cloath, &c. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he give for his life.* The *Egyptians* sold all that they had to *Joseph* for bread, and when all was gone they sold themselves, *Gen. 47. 18.*

7 It is usually attended with other Judgements, as Sword and Plague, such great Judgements seldome goe alone, *Jer. 14. 15, 16. & 24. 10. Ezek. 7. 15. & 14. 21.*

Ler us then fly from sin, which turns that God, who is mercy and pity it self, into fire and fury, and provokes him to send such terrible Judgements on his people. Especially take heed of four sins.

1 *Intemperance*, Drunkenness and Gluttony bring the famine on a Land, Abuse of plenty loseth plenty, when men rise early to follow strong drink, then their honourable men are famished, *Isa. 5. 11, 12, 13. Joel 1.*

2 *Covenant-breaking*; when there was a three years Famine in the dayes of *David*, hee inquired of the Lord what was the ground of it; the answer was, that it was for *Sual*, and for his bloody house, because he slew the *Gibeonites*, contrary to Covenant confirmed by an oath, *Josh. 9. 7. 15. 18. 2 Sam. 21. 1. Jer. 34. 17, 18.*

3 *When men spend the strength which they receive from the Creature, in the service of the Deuil*, consuming them upon their lusts, or in sacrificing to Idols, as the *Israelites* did here, they served *Baal* with the Corn and Wine which God had given them, therefore God took it from them.

4 Con-

4 Contempt of the Word, the wayes and Worship of God. God oft punisheth our abuse of Spiritual food with the want of Corporal, They that hate his Messengers shall dye by the Famine, *Jer. 11. 21, 22.* so when men preferre their own interests before Gods, and can dwell themselves in sealed houses, but the House of the Lord must lye wast, this brings a Curse upon their Crops and Labour, *Hag. 1. 6. 9. 10. & 2. 17. 18, 19.*

See more Sins in *Mellif. Theolog. Binchins*, Loc. 12. P. 2. p. 14<sup>n</sup>. &c. D. Gange his *Airons*, p. 2. p. 139, &c. *Top/cl on Joel*, p. 119. & 213. *Clerks Mirror*, chap. 51.

2 Since it is the Lord that sends cleanness and want of bread amongst us, let us be patient under it, let us be dumbe and silent because the Lord hath done it. There is no evil in the City of this kind especially, but the Lord is the Author and orderer of it, it comes not by Accident, but by Divine appointment, it is the Lord that sends Famines to Cities and Kingdoms; and the rather we should bee patient, when we consider that our Famines are nothing to what our sins deserve. 2 Nothing comparatively, when we consider the seven years Famine in *Egypt*, when for five years together there was neither Earing nor Harvest, *Gen. 41. 40. & 45. 6.* In the three years Siege of *Samaria*, the people within did eat their own Children, and fed upon Dung, (*2 King. 6. 25. 28. 29.*) an Asses head was sold for eighty peeces of Silver, which is ten pound in our coyn, and the fourth part of a Kab of Doves dung for five peeces of Silver, now a Kab contained four pound and five ounces, and the fourth part was thirteen ounces, and for this they gave ten shillings and upward. But no famine was like *Jerusalems* famine, as wee may see in the *Lamentations* of *Jeremy*, when the Children cried for bread and there was none to give them, those that were clothed in Scarlet embraced the Dung-hill, their beautiful *Nazarites* were blacker than Coals, and the pitifull Mothers became Butchers of their own Children. As the Lord said to his people, *Go to Shiloh*, so say I, *Go to Germany*, and to *Rochel*, and consider what God hath done to them for their Sins, there you shall see Doggs, Cats, and Rats sold in the Markets, and men and women fighting for them. There you shall see Women eating their own Children, the living feeding upon the dead, and digging up dead Corps out of their Graves that they might feed upon them. Beggers coming to doors have been killed and eaten, yea the skins of Horses,

In the Siege of *Rochel*, 1628. there died of the Famine sixteen thousand persons, an Egge was sold for 8 s. a pint of Milk 30 s. a Bushel of Wheat 20 l. a pound of Butter 30 s. &c. See *Book of Martyrs* 3 Vol. in fine, p. 73: 74. Edit. uk.

Sheep,

Sheep, and Oxen, have been their food; let us take heed lest *Germanies* Heresies, Blasphemies, Apostacies, Drunkenness, &c. be found in *England*, lest *Germanies* Plagues come hither also. O let us be an obedient people, let us not fight against God with his own blessings, nor abuse his plenty to his dishonour, but serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, for it is Piety that breeds plenty, *Psa.* 81. 12, 13. *Isa.* 1. 19. if there bee but a sincere will and desire to obey, we shall eate the good of the Land, and in time of famine wee shall be fed, *Psal.* 33. 19. & 34. 10. & 37. 19. *Job* 5. 20. *Prov.* 10. 3. *Isa.* 33. 15, 16.

*Fides famem  
non formidat,  
Bibos.*

2 Live by faith, and then in an holy security at destruction and famine you may laugh, *Job* 5. 22. Faith answereth all distrustful cares and feares, as *Abraham* did in another case, *God will provide.*

Obj. But thou mayest dye by the Famine?

A. True faith faith, and that is best of all for me, for that will free me from sin, and from all the miseries that attend it. He cannot dye ill that lives well, let him dye by Famine, Sword, Pestilence, or whatever Disease, yet if he dye in the Lord, in his fear and favour, he is blessed, *Revel.* 14. 13. Though the Fig-tree should not blossom, yet a beleever can rejoyce in the Lord in the want of all (*Hab.* 3. 17.) hee knowes that the Lord can bless a little, and make the Wid-dows meal to increase by spending, *1 King.* 17. 37. he knowes that God can put vertue and nourishment into the Creature, and make us walke in the strength of one meal for many dayes together; as he did *Elijah*, who went forty dayes together in the strength of one dinner; or if he take away our meat (as the Martyr said) he will take away our appetite also; *Man lives not by bread only, but by every word of God,* *Mat.* 4. 4.

See Mr. Trapp  
on Mar. 4. 4.

2 Obj. God payes Sinners many times in their own coyn. As men deal with others, so God deals with them. These Idolatrous *Israelites* kept Gods faithful Ministers hungry, and spent all on Idols, and false Prophets, and now God keeps them hungry; they like fat Beasts were luxurious, and abused their food, and now they shall be kept short, and want food; they abused their Wine; and now they shall want Water; and though Great men many times escape in times of  
famine,

famine, yet God can smite them with such Diseases, that they inall neither eate nor drink, *In quo quis peccat, in eo puni- tur.* *Absolon* that was proud of his hair, at last it became an Halter that helpt to hang him; *David* that abused anothers bed, hath his own bed defiled by *Absolon*, who lay with his Concubines; when he proudly numbred the people, hee lost them by the Pestilence; so *Hezekiah* that was lifted up with his Treasures, lost them, *Isa. 39. 5.* Such is our corruption that weseeldome know the worth of Mercies till we want them, *Cavendo potius quam fruendo*, when wee want food, health, wealth, peace, and the Gospel of Peace, then wee begin to know the price of these mercies.

3 Obs. *The principal end that God aims at in our correllions, is our conversion.* He corrects us for our profit, that wee might be partakers of his Holiness, *Heb. 12. 10.* he sent the Famine on this People, that so they might return unto him. This is his special end, *Job 33. 19. to 28. & 36. 8, 9. Psal. 94. 12. & 119. 71. Luke 15. 14. to 30.* wee should not therefore lose the benefit of our Afflictions, nor frustrate Gods end in correcting us, but say with the Martyr, *Lord doe thou beat, and I will bend.* As the Apostle saies of Patience (*Jam. 1. 4.*) *Let patience have its perfect work*; that is, let it be sincere, and endure to the end; so say I of Repentance, let it not be a half turn, or make you howl as the Famine did those *Israelites* (*Hos. 7. 14.*) but let his rods bring us home fully to himself, that we may return to him with all our hearts, and then we shall be happy.

See Mr. Dyke  
on Afflictions,  
p. 342. & c. at  
the end of his  
Com. on Phi-  
lemon.

4 Obs. *Such as turn truly, must turn to God.* This is implied here in that the Lord complains, *Yet have yee not returned unto mee, saith the Lord.* Many turn from sin to sin, they turn from Drunkenness to Coverousness, from Idolatry to Liber- tinism, &c. This is a changing of one sin for another, but true conversion is a turning from all sin to God, it is a turning from sin which is the greatest evil, unto God who is the chiefest good, *Dent. 4. 30. Jer. 3. 1. 22. Lam. 3. 40. Hos. 14. 1. Joel 2. 12.*

5 Obs. *Hardned Sinners are incorrigible and incurable.* When men have got a custom of sinning and have long re- jected the Word of God, then it is not all that Mount *Sinai*, or Mount *Sion* can afford, nor all the dreadful Curses of the

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See Mr Prof-  
fets Fast Ser.  
on Isa. 9. 13.  
and Mr. Youngs  
Drunkards  
Charact. p. 243  
and my Com.  
on Hol. 13. 16.  
p. 132.  
D. Keynotes on  
Psal. 110. 1.  
p. 336, 337.  
folio.

See this Point  
very well en-  
larged, by Mr.  
Coker, on Jam.  
2. 19. p. 98.  
*Corripimur sed  
non corrigimur,  
peccamus sed  
non desistimus.*  
Salvian.  
See more in my  
Com. on Hol.  
13. 13. p. 22

one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon them; as we see in *Cain, Pharaoh, Saul*, and others; Let the Lord spend all his Arrows upon them, yet they return not unto him that smites them, *Isa. 9. 13.* but the more they are smitten, the worse they are, *Isa. 1. 5.* like the Smiths stithy, the more it is stricken the harder it is; let God smite them yet they refuse to receive correction. (*Jer. 2. 30.*) The Bellows are burnt (the Prophets Lungs are consumed) and the Founder melts in vain, for the wicked are not turned from their wickedness, therefore reprobate silver shall men call them (*Jer. 6. 29, 30.*) because their scum still abides in them, *Ezek. 24. 6. 12. 13.* How impregnable are the consciences of wicked men, who are no more moved with the threatnings of Gods Ministers than the people which live under the fall of *Nilus* are at the found thereof; their continual familiarity with that noyse, either quite deafe them, or else makes them dis-regard it. They are as senseless of what is spoken as the Pillars which they leane to, or the Seats which they sit upon; so that many men come short of the very faith of Devils; for they beleieve there is a God; and that all which he hath spoken in his Word is true; they beleieve the Power, Justice, and Wrath of God so far as to tremble at it, and herein they goe beyond most wicked men, who never goe so farre as to quake and tremble at Gods threatnings, yea the Devil hath taught them a lesson which he cannot learn himself, viz. to mock at Gods threatnings, saying in their hearts they shall never come upon us. The Devil quakes and fears, whilst these are senseless and incorrigible. How many are corrected, but not amended; beaten, but not bettered; this doubles mens sins and makes them out of measure sinful, when neither the Word nor the Sword, neither Mercies nor Menaces, neither Promises nor Threatnings can work upon men; when sin is grown too strong for that means which God hath ordained to suppress it, they are nigh to utter destruction. This plainly appears by this people of *Israel*; after their defection and Apostacy from the Worship of God, they never Prospered but had one Judgement after another till they were quite destroyed. We are apt to wonder at *Israels* induration, and yet this is *Englands* Sin. God hath done as much to reclaim us as ever he did for *Israel*, and yet we have not returned to him.

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1 The Lord hath punisht our neighbour Nations to make us fear, we have seen what he hath done to *Germany, Ireland, Savoy, &c.* he expected that their desolation should have been our Instruction (*Zeph. 3. 6, 7.*) but yet we have not returned to the Lord.

2 He hath sent amongst us many *Elijahs* and *Elisha's*, to woove us, and to warn us, and yet we have not returned to the Lord.

3 He hath drawn us with the cords of love, and given us Mercy upon Mercy, Deliverance upon Deliverance, Victory upon Victory, and yet yee have not returned to me saith the Lord.

4 VVe have had Sword, Plague, and Famine amongst us, and yet yee have not returned unto me saith the Lord.

5 And now the Lord seems to threaten greater Judgements, and to deal more severely with us for our obstinacy, and impenitency, and yet we are as stupid and stubborn as ever, and never once think of returning to him that smites us. O that the Lord would awaken every soul of us out of this deep and deadly sleep! oh that every one would now goe into his Closet, and there seriously ask his soul, *What have I done?* Against what light and love, against what wooings and warnings, against what Mercies and Judgements have I rebelled! None so beloved of his God as I, and none that hath so abused his love as I have done. Oh that we could now take shame to our selves for our stubborn standing out so long against so good and gracious a God! oh that we could judge our selves for our rebellion, and loathe our selves for our great provocations, then would the Lord repent of the evil he intended against us, and we might hope to see better days than yet we have seen.

6 Obs. *Hypocritical turning is no turning in Gods esteem.* This People did sometimes howl in their misery, and fast and pray (*Hos. 7. 14.*) but it was but counterfeite, and therefore the Lord chargeth them still with this, *Yet have yee not returned to me, saith the Lord.* False things in Scripture are counted as no things. A wicked man is accounted as no man, *Jer. 5. 1.* the streets of *Jerusalem* were full of men, but because they were not good men, God calls them no men. Thus the wicked



are said to have no heart, *i.e.* no good heart, and so as good have none at all, *Hos.* 7. 11.

VERSE 7. 8.

*And I also have with-holden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the Harvest; and I caused it to raine upon one City, and caused it not to raine upon another City; one peece was rained upon, and the peece whereupon it rained not, withered.*

*So two or three Cities wandred unto one City to drink water, but they were not satisfied, yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.*

**T**He Prophet descends to the enumeration of new Judgements, two of which were the *Causes of the Famine*. The first was Drought, and want of Rain, *vers.* 7, 8. The second was Blasting, Mil-dew, and the Palmer-worm, *vers.* 9.

This People were like Clouds without water, and yeelded no obedience to God, but followed Idols; and now his clouds have no water for them. When God is against us all are against us; so that here we have a second Scourge, where-with the Lord chastised this people that he might bring them home to himself, *viz.* Drought and Barrenness; he had before punished them with Famine, and want of Bread, now he punisheth them with Thirst, and want of Water. Thus the Lord tried all conclusions to better them, but in vain, as will appear by the sequel.

In this Verse we have 1. The efficient cause of this Judgement, *viz.* the Lord, *I have with-holden the rain from you*, *viz.* the latter rain, which that hot Country had most need of, I have forbidden it to fall upon you, saith God.

*Manang, sobibui, prohibui, aercui.*

2 Here is the continuance of the Judgement, it was not for a week or two, but for three months, even till the fruits of the earth withered and were destroyed, and this the Lord did, the more deeply to affect them with their sins. One months want of rain, in that hot Country especially, should have starved them, two months should have astonished them, but three



three months should have fully awakened them, yet such was their gross senselessness and stupidity, that they laid it not to heart. And therefore the Lord the better to set forth his patience, and this peoples impenitency, sets forth his dealings particularly with them, and tells us how he brought the *Famine*, the *Drought*, the *Palmer-worm*, and the *Pestilence*, &c. upon them. He came not suddenly upon them, but gave them space to repent, and time to consider their wayes, and the tokens of his displeasure against them. But such was their obstinacy and malice, that nothing could work upon them, their Disease was too strong for the Physick, and their Maladies for Gods remedies, his labour was lost upon them.

3 Here is the juncture of time when this rain was withheld from them, viz. three months before Harvest, which was about *March*, for about the latter end of *May* in that hot Country was their Harvest; this was called the *latter rain*, and was very needful to fit, fill, and ripen the Corn for Harvest. For the better understanding of this, we must know that the Land of *Canaan* was not like the Land of *Egypt*, for in *Egypt* they seldome or never had any rain (*Zech. 14. 18.*) for the River *Nilus* did once a year over-flow the greatest part of their Country, and so did mellow and soften the earth for all the year after. But *Canaan* was a mountainous place, and could not be so watered, and therefore the Lord took more special care of it, and watered it with rain from Heaven; (*Deut. 11. 10, 11.*) In this Land there were two more especial seasons for rain, viz. the *former rain* about *September*, when the Seed was sown, that it might take the better rooting; and the *latter rain* in the Spring time, when the Corn was grown up and earing, to fit it for the Harvest; and this was called the *latter rain*, which is said to fall in the first month, that is, in *March*, which with them was the beginning of the year, *Joel 2. 23.* Hence are those frequent expressions in Scripture of the *former and the latter rain*, *Deut. 11. 14. Jer. 5. 24. Hos. 6. 3. Zech. 10. 2. Jam. 5. 7.* for in Harvest it seldome or never rained in those hot Countries, and therefore when *Samuel* by Prayer had obtained rain in Harvest, they looked upon it as a prodigious thing, *1 Sam. 12. 16, 17, 18, 19.* now the want of either of these rains was sad, but specially the latter, when a man shall see his Corn sown, grown

up, and then when he expects a Harvest after all his pains, for want of rain to have it wither and dye before his eyes, this must needs be grievous to him.

*Ne putaretis  
hoc lege naturæ  
fieri, & ist o-  
rum cursu, su-  
per unam civi-  
tatem plui, super  
alteram non  
plui. Ribera.*

4 Here is the accurateness of Gods Judgements, he distinguisheth between City and City, Feild and Feild, *I caused it to rain upon one City, and not upon another.* As hee commanded the Sun to shine on *Goshen*, and not on *Egypt*, so he commands the rain to fall on some, and not on others. These things came not by chance, but by providence; it is I (saith the Lord) that commanded it to rain upon one parcel of ground, and not upon another.

5 Here is the effect of this Judgement, it makes them run from City to City for water (*vers. 8.*) but in vain, for they could not get enough to satisfie their necessities. They were sensible of bodily wants, but insensible of Spiritual wants, and therefore

6 The Lord concludes with the usual Epistrophe, *Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Though they were thus sadly afflicted, yet were they not bettered, but remained incurable under all corrections.

## OBSERVATIONS.

*I Want of seasonable rain is a punishment for sin.* When God is angry with a People, then hee with-holds the former and the latter rain from them. God hath rain enough in store, but it is our sins which keeps it from falling upon us; his hand is not shortned that it cannot save, but it is our iniquity that turns away good things from us; these shut the Heavens, and make them hard as Iron, so that they cannot heare the earth, when (in its kind) it gapes and cries for rain, *Deut. 28. 23, 24. Hag. 1. 9, 10.* it is obedience that brings rain. Those Cities that were rained upon in the text, some conceive to have been godly Cities which hated Idolatry, and worshipped the true God, though the text will not bear such a glosse, for God makes his Rain, which is but a common Blessing, to fall in the Wilderness (*Job 38. 26, 27.*) and upon the unjust as well as upon the just; yet it is most certain that Piety hath the promise even of Temporal blessings, and such as are faithful with God in Spirituall, shall have

have Temporals given in to the bargain, *Levit. 26. 3, 4. Hof. 2. 21, 22. Hag. 2. 18, 19. Zech. 8. 12. Matth. 6. 33.* beware then of Disobedience, Apostasie, and abusing the Creature to intemperance. or the service of Idols, which provoke the Lord to strip us of our mercies, *Jerem. 14. 4, 5, 6.* wee finde the people mourning for want of rain, but *vers. 7. 10.* you may see the procuring cause of that Judgement, *for our backslidings are many, and we have sinned against thee, and have loved to wander after Idols;* and this was Israels Sin here, which more especially brought this Judgement on them.

2 Obs. *Rain falls by appointment, and not by accident; by providence, and not by chance.* It is not the Sun, the Moon, the Starres, or any other Natural cause, much less any Idols that can procure raine; but it is the Lords Prerogative Royal to give and order rain, *it is he that makes it rain on one City, and not on another.* The Clouds are Gods Servants, hee bids them goe rain here and not there, and they exactly obey his commands (*Job 37. 11, 12, 13.*) hence they are called *His Clouds,* (*Job. 26. 8.*) 1. In respect of *Efficiency,* he causeth the Sun to draw up moyst Vapours, and then turns them into Rain-water, preparing the Clouds to hold it. Hence God is called the Father of the rain, *Job 38. 28. & 36. 27. & 37. 6.* 2. They are his Clouds in respect of *Subserviency,* they are no sooner produced but they are presently acting in their sphere, and region for their Lord and Master, one while raining on this Country, and anon on thar; These are Gods Water-pots with which hee waters the World, the *Bottles of Heaven,* (*Job 38. 37.*) out of which God sends rain to refresh the earth and make it fruitful; he crowns the year with his goodness, when he makes his Clouds to drop down fatness on us, *Psal. 65. 12.* The earth is as it were Gods Garden, the Sea his Cistern, and the Clouds his Bottles to refresh the earth, and mollifie it, and make it fit for our service. This is a great mercy, let not the commonness of it take away the sense of it; but let us fear to offend him who gives us rain; God takes it ill when we slight his Providence in this particular, *Jerem. 5. 24.* neither say they, let us fear the Lord, who giveth the former and the latter rain *q. d.* what a strange thing is this that the sweet showers of rain have not softened your

math. 5. 45. S.

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your hard hearts, and made you fear to offend him; wee should fear him who hath not only Fire, but Seas of water to pour on such as displease him. Give not thou Gods glory to another, many ascribe rain, as the Philistims did their destruction, to *chance*; (*1 Sam. 6. 9.*) so say many, this wind hath brought us rain, or this Moon or this Planet, or this Idol god; the Prophet confutes all these in the text, *It is I that caused it to rain*, saith the Lord. Hence the rain is called *His gift*, *Job 5. 10.* *Psal. 104. 13, 14. & 147. 8.* *Isa. 3. 23.* which is given sometimes in *mercy*, *Psal. 68. 9.* *Acts 14. 17.* and sometimes in *judgement*, *Ezra 1. 9.* *Job 37. 13.* *Prov. 28. 3.* *Ezek. 38. 22.* no Men nor Creatures, no Idol-gods, no nor the Heavens themselves can give a shower of rain without a word of command from God (*Jer. 14. 22.*) and therefore the Lord commands us in the want of rain to ask it of him, *Zech. 10. 1.* so did *Elijah*, *Jam. 5. 18.* and hee promiseth to hear our Prayers in this particular, *1 King. 8. 35, 36.* *2 Chron. 7. 13, 14.*

Away then with those vain *Prognosticators*, that take upon them to fore-tell rain, and snow, and the times and seasons which God hath concealed from the sons of men. Rain is a future contingent thing, and therefore no man can positively say it shall rain on such a day, but not on such a day; besides, the text tells us, that it may rain on one City, and yet not rain at the same time on another. The folly of such persons is sufficiently known to every observant eye, *Nulla dies sine errato*, let a man write fair weather when they write foul, and he may hit as true as they. *Isa. 47. 13.*

Especially take heed of *Judicial Astrology*, when men take upon them to Calculate mens Nativities, to fore-tell Warres, Plagues, Famines, and changes in States and Kingdomes, and all this by the Stars; this is a Satanical cheat, it is great folly and madness; if you will beleieve *St. Austin*,

They bring people into miserable slavery, who take upon them to fore-tell by the Starres, the manners of men, together with the acts and events of things. This judiciary Astrology is the

very Key that openeth the door to Witch-craft and Idolatry. Hence we find South-sayers, Astrologers, and Idolaters, many times

See more in  
Mr. Caryl on  
Job 5. 10.

See Mr. Perkins  
his Resolution  
of the Coun-  
try-man, pro-  
ving it utterly  
unlawful to  
buy or use our  
yearly Prog-  
nosticators,  
Vol. 3. p. 653.

*Vendunt im-  
peritis homini-  
bus miserabi-  
lem servitutem, ex notatione siderum  
velle nascentium mores, actus, eventa pre-  
dicere; magnus error, & magna demen-  
tia. Aug. de Doct. Christi. l. 2. c. 21.*

times yoked together, as *Dan. 2. 2. 11. Amos 5. 16.* The Devil delights to have men study this Art.

1 Because it robs *God* of his glory, and ascribes the foretelling of things contingent to the Stars, which is proper only unto *God*, *Isa. 41. 23.*

2 It is injurious to *men*, and keeps them in perpetual fear and slavery, telling them, that if they be born under such or such a Planet, then they must be burnt, drowned, or hanged, &c. When people beleieve not *Gods* Word, then hee gives them up to these delusions, *Isa. 66. 4.* have nothing therefore to doe with those *Pandors of the Devil, and Brokers for Hell*; buy not their Lying, Jugling, ambiguous Books, but burn them, *Aits 19. 19.* if such Books as derogate from great men must be burnt, how much more such as draw mens hearts from trusting in the living *God*? The Astrologer (saith the learned *Binchius*) sins against *God*, against *men*, and against himself: because this Art is full of Pestilent curiosity, of tormenting fear, and deadly slavery. The learned and laborious Knight hath long since condemned this Devillish Art; take it in his own words, *Astrologia eventu fallax, usu superstitiosa, à Barbaris nationibus importata, bonis temporibus Gracia inter subtile ignota, etiam malis Roma pulsa. Ars, quod in arte turpissimum est, nullis texta principiis, nulla subnix demonstratione, nullo constans syllogismo.* Mellific. Theo-  
log. Loc. 5. p. 6.  
Sir Hen. Savil  
in Oracione co-  
ram Regina.  
Elizab. 1592.  
Inter subtile  
fatuus hos nu-  
merasse, nisi  
rudiores. Luther

Against this cursed Art, see Arch-Bishop *Abbots* Thesis tertia. *Fulleri Miscelan. l. 1. c. 16. p. 99. Spanheim. Dub. 33. P. 2. p. 331. Brochman. Cas. consc. p. 88. folio. Gataker* against *Lilly*, Lord *Virulams* Advancement of Learning, p. 147. *Weemse* Vol. 4. p. 21, &c. *Barclai*es *Argenis*, chap. 17. *Calvin* *Opuscula*, Tract. adversus Astrologiam, p. 801. *Picars* against *Heyden*. *Waterhouse* Defence of Humane Learning, p. 30, &c.

#### VERSE 8.

So two or three Cities wandered unto one City to drink water, but they were not satisfied; yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

**R**ain in the Land of *Canaan* where *Israel* dwelt, it being a very hot Eastern Country, was very necessary, not only

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for

for the fruites of the earth, but also for the quenching of thirst both of Man and Beast, especially if it be true which some learned men affirm, *viz.* That there were but few Springs here, and no considerable rivers but only *Jordan*; this made them glad to keep Rain-water in Cisterns for all uses, being most afflicted with Thirst and Drought if it rained not.

This made them run from one City to another to seek water; for as hunger, so thirst breaks thorow all difficulties. Those Cities that had no water, did run to those Cities that had either Spring-Water, or Rain-water, *but they were not sufficed*, saith the text, so great was the Drought, and so many that wanted, that they could not get water enough to relieve their necessities, no not in those places where they had heard that it had rained. This shewes the great straight that they were in, no digging nor delving for Water at home could help them, no new nor old Springs could supply them, but they were forced to leave their houses, and to goe from City to City to seek water, and yet they could not be satisfied; for the Wells, or Water which might supply one City, yet could not supply so many. This one would think should have awakened them, and brought them to Repentance, no doubt but it did afright them, and made them sad, but yet they were not bettered by their sadness, for they went on still in their sins and superstitions dangerously, and desperately, without any returning, and therefore the Lord upbraids them once more with a yet have yet not returned unto me, saith the Lord.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 Sin, and specially the sin of Idolatry brings a People into great straights. The Earth here languisheth, the Corn withereth, and men run up and down for water to quench their thirst, and yet cannot get it, and why is all this? why for the sin and Apostacy of this people, 1 King. 8. 35. & 17. 1.

2 Obs. God hath variety of Judgements in store, wherewith to punish a rebellious people. If want of Bread will not mend them, he will try what want of Water will doe, and if neither of these will work, yet he hath the Pestilence and Sword

to follow. Great Judgements are like great men, they seldom goe alone, they have many attendants. Hence when the Lord had threatned many fore Judgements against his People, hee tells them that if they will not be reformed by these things, he will yet plague them seven times more, according to their sins, yea and seven to that, and seven to that (*Levit. 26. 18. 21. V, Babington 24. 28.*) seven times, that is, many times, and more ex- on *Exod. 11. 1. P. 221. folio.* tremably than formerly; if one Judgement will not work upon *Pharaoh*, he hath nine more that shall and if lesser will not stir and mend him, he hath greater that shall end him, *Exod. 11. 6. 12.* God hath not only written Judgements, but also many unwritten ones to send upon a rebellious people, *Deut. 28. 61.*

3 Obs. *True repentance is a very difficult thing.* It is not so easily wrought as many imagine. This people here had Line upon Line, Sermon upon Sermon, Prophet upon Prophet, and Plague upon Plague, and yet you see the charge lies against them still, that *they had not yet returned to the Lord.* The change of nature is no easie thing, it is an act of Omnipotency; now true repentance is no less than the changing of the nature, it is not only a change of the words, or of the works, but of the heart and inward man; it is the changing of a Lion into a Lamb, of a VVolf into a Sheep, of Fire into VVater, and of Darknes into Light, *Isa. 11. 8. Ephes. 5. 8.* Se Mr. case None can change Nature, but the God of Nature, no rods or his Morning afflictions of themselves can doe it; they rather stupifie men, Lecture, quarto or else make them fret, and so drive them further from God, P. 487. till he by his grace doe sanctifie them, and set them home upon our hearts; they will never better us; how many are corrected, but are never taught; but when the Lord \*teacheth Mortification, Sanctification, Humiliation, and obedience by our sufferings, then happy are we, *Psal. 94. 12.*

\* See an excellent little Tract of Mr. Caser, on *Psal. 94. 12.* and Mr. *Harveys Cordial* for the Afflicted, and *Trapps Love Tokens*



## VERSE 9.

I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew, when your Gardens, and your Vineyards, and your Fig-trees, and your Olive-trees increased; the Palmer-worm devoured them, yet have ye not returned unto mee, saith the Lord.

**V**VE are now come to the third Scourge which God used for the amendment of this People, and that is the smiting of their fruit which grew in their Fields, Gardens, and Vine-yards. They had abused them to Luxury and Idolatry, and now they lose them. God had given them Corn to supply their necessity, and Vines, and Figgs, and Olives for delight; but their sins deprived them both of the one and the other. In the words we have,

1 The Person smiting, and that is the Lord, it is I, your Creator, Preserver, Deliverer, that hath blest you so long, that now doth blast you, *It is I that have smitten you.*

2 Here is the Rod with which hee smites them, consisting of three Lashes.

1 Blasting.

2 Mildew.

3 The Palmer-worm.

*Hac duo & opinar, morbi & vitia segetum sunt, nam proximè horti & plantæ majores ab eruca dicuntur esse consumpti.*

*Sanctius.*  
\* See my Comment. on

Hos. 13. 15.

*Siddaphon, est uredo, ariditas & percussio segetum, quando ventus orientalis ingreditur spicas, ut non maturevant.*

Blasting and Mildew, that may have relation to the Corn, and be one cause of the Famine before mentioned, *Verf. 6.* (and the Palmer-worm may have relation to the fruit. God used variety of Judgements that they might the better see his hand in all, and not attribute things to Fate, or Fortune, to Stars, or second causes.

Blasting is a Curse threatned against a disobedient People; (*Deut. 28. 22.*) it usually comes from an \* East-wind, which is a scorching drying Wind, withering the Corn, and making it look yellow, *Gen. 41. 6.*

Mildew is the spoiling of the Corn by excessive moysture, making

making it look \* pale; so that it never comes to maturity, \* *Jerokion, rubigo, significat pallorem, Jer. 30. 6.*  
for the natural greenness is gone before it bee ripe, and the colour is faded.

The *Palmer-worm* is a noysome, devouring Worm, it is one of Gods great Armies which he sends against a rebellious People, to destroy their Vine-yards and Fig-trees, that is, the fruites of their Vines, Fig-trees, and Olives, by a Metonymy of the sub-

ject. These are worse than Locusts, for that feeds only on the tops of the ears of Corn, as he flies; but the Palmer-worm sticks close to the Fruit and Flowers they light on, and will not off till they have consumed them. It makes clean work, leaving nothing behind it. These *Israelites* that neglected their Souls, yet used great care and pains about their Vines, Olives, Gardens, and Orchards, but all your cost and care saith the Lord shall be lost, and become a prey to the Palmer-worm.

3 Here is the *time* when the Lord smote them, and that was in the very flower and prime, when Gardens, and Vineyards, &c. were increased, and loaden with fruit, when they were multiplying; then he blasted them; or the multitude of your Gardens and Vineyards did the Palmer-worm devour, *Harbor, in multiplicando, i. e. augmentibus hortis vestris, vel cum multum ferrent hortis vestris.*  
so the Margin of our Bible.

4 Here are the *Persons* whose fruites were smitten, viz. the rebellious *Israelites*, included in the Pronoun Possessive, yours, yours, yours; your Gardens, your Vine-yards, your Fig-trees, your Olive-trees,; it is for your sins, and your sakes that these are smitten.

5 Here is the unsuccessfulness of these rods upon them, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. One Judgment should have wrought upon them, or a second at least, but when a third and fourth shall come, and yet a people shall not be wrought upon, it argues the height of obstinacy and malice, and that such Persons are exceedingly blinded, and beset by the Devil to their own destruction; it is a God-provoking Sin, thus still to sin against the remedy of their recovery; and therefore the Lord still layes his finger on this sore, and oft complains of it, as here, so elsewhere *Isa. 9. 13.*

See more before on verse 6. Obs. 5.

*Jer. 3. 10. & 5. 3. & 8. 5. Hos. 7. 10. Hag. 2. 17.* How oft doth he require the amendment of this fault, making many promises to incourage them, *Jer. 3. 1. 7. 14. 22.* and threatens them if they will not, *Jer. 15. 7.* and yet still they continue impenitent.

## OBSERVATIONS.

*I God wants not Hosts and Armies of Creatures to subdue a stubborn and rebellious people.* He hath the Host of Heaven, and the Hosts of the Earth at his beck, and if he but hiss, or stamp, or give the least intimation to them, they are presently up in arms against us, *Isa. 5. 26. & 7. 18.* Frost and Snow, Hayl and Tempests, are all his servants, ready prest to doe his will (*Exod. 9. 23. Psal. 147. 16, 17, 18. Hag. 2. 17*) with these hee can destroy our Fruites in the bud, or in the blade, or when they are come to maturity, yea when they are in the Barn he can send Lightning and consume them. If hee be angry with us, he can call for an Army of Insects, and contemptible Animals, and by these he can destroy us. When *Pharaoh* rebelled against him, the Lord sent an Army of Frogs, Flies, and Lice against him, and by these hee vext him (*Exod. 8. 2. 16. 21.*) the Lord hath Hosts of Men and Angels at command, but hee chuseth rather to confound his enemies by these contemptible Creatures, that he may exalt his own power, and abase proud man; hee hath the Canker-worm, the Palmer-worm, the Locust, and the Caterpillar, these are called his *great army*, which he sends against a disobedient people, *Joel 2. 18. 25.*

Obj. *We are not troubled with an Army of Locusts, Palmer-worms, &c. these were proper to those Eastern Countries?*

Ans. It is true, *literally*, our cold Southern Climate is not subject to the annoyance of these; yet if the Lord bee angry with us, he can send even these upon us, for South and East are alike to him. *Mystically, and Metaphorically*, hee hath troubled us with an Army of Locusts, Caterpillars, Canker-worms, &c. yea in kind, he sent a strange Grub which devoured only the Barley (which is most abused by Drunkenness) in many parts of the Land, in the year one thousand six hundred forty nine, yea and he can and will (if *England* goe on

to sin after the rate that it hath done of 1are years ) bring in an Army of Forreigners, fierce and savage men, whose Language we understand not, who shall shew no mercy to the Old, nor pity to the Young ; what is said of the Natural, is most true of these Metaphorical Palmer-worms, *they are the last and the worst of evils* ; they sweep all away before them, and make clean work where they goe, *Joel 2. 3.* and this is that Judgement which the Lord seems at this day to bee preparing for *England*, and yet we are not affected with it. The Churches enemies are strongly united, and have made a kind of Universal peace amongst themselves, *Gebal and Ammon*, and *Amaleck*, the *Moabites*, the *Ismalites*, the *Hagarens*, &c. *France, Spain, Italy, Curland, Holland, Denmark, &c.* are all confederate and united ; and the Churches of Christ who should joyn to their Dove-like simplicity, Serpentine wisdom, when in this juncture of time they should be most strongly united, they are most sadly divided, both within and without, the King of *Denmark*, with the Electors of *Saxony* and *Brandenburg*, joyn with Papists against the Protestant interest, and so doth the *Hollander*. What sad Massacres have been in *Savoy* and *Poland* is well known to the world ; and *Plots* are preparing for the destruction of the Protestants both in *France* and *Switzerland* ; and *England* that was alwaies wont to preserve the Protestant interest, and assist it in all Nations, yet is so sadly divided, and crumbled into so many Factions and Fractions, into so many Divisions, and Subdivisions, that without a Miracle of Mercy, we are like to bee made a prey to the Common adversary, who labours with all his might to divide us, that so he may destroy us. Let us then serve the Lord with one shoulder, and with one consent ; let us not provoke this great God, who hath so many Armies in store ready to execute his Judgements on us, *Jer. 15. 3.* Hee is the best friend, and the saddest foe ; if he be for us, all is for us, but if he be against us, all creatures are against us. We should therefore make peace with this great Lord-General of all Armies, and then they will all be at peace with us ; when our wayes please the Lord, he will make even our enemies to be at peace with us, *Prov. 16. 7.* the men of *Tire* and *Sidon* desired to be at peace with *Herod*, because their Land was nourisht by the Kings Land, *Acts 12. 20.* all we have, we have

have it from God, we are Tenants at will to him, and therefore should be careful to preserve his favour. Many when Blasting and Mildews are abroad, goe not to God, but to a Bush for ayd ; They will *May* their Corn, and stick up a Bush, thinking by this means to keep it from Blasting ; a Heathenish custom, to be abhorred of all such as acknowledge the Providence of God. Such Atheistical practices may justly provoke the Lord to blast thy Corn indeed. Little better is that of the Popish Processions about the Fields, with Flaggs, and Banners, and Bables. The best and only remedy in this case, is humble penitential Prayer, *1 King. 8. 37, 38, 39.* to such the Promise runs, *If Blasting, Mildew, Locust, or Caterpillars be in the Land, if Gods people shall pray, and know every man the plague of his own heart, that is, his Sin, which is the cause of all other Plagues, then will the Lord hear in heaven, and forgive, and heal the Land,* *2 Chron. 6. 28. 29, 30. & 2. 7. 13, 14.*

2 Obs. *Loss of fruit is a punishment for sin, and a sign of Gods displeasure against a people.* Fruit, Corn, Cattel, Trees, all fare the worse for sinful man. God turns a fruitful Land into a Wilderneck for the wickedness of them that dwell therein, *Psal. 107. 34.* and therefore when the Lord is angry with a People, we read how he brake their trees with hayl, and destroyed their Vines and Fig-trees, *Exod. 9. 25. & 10. 5. Dent. 28. 16, 17, 18. 39, 40. Psal. 78. 48. & 105. 33.* we should therefore over-look second causes, and see Gods hand afflicting us in these losses. Many impute that to Winds, Frosts, Blasts, &c. which are indeed the finger of God, pointing to our abuse of the Creatures, which provokes him to take them from us. It will be our wisdom therefore when ever the Lord gives us plenty, to take notice of Gods hand, and praise him ; and when we want them, to be humbled before him, and to beg the restoring of them at his hand, who gives to all that ask in faith, liberally, and upbraidech no man.

See more in M.  
Austine his  
Treatise of  
Fruit-trees, p.  
16, 17. the best  
on that subject  
for Natural  
and Theolog.  
observations  
that I have  
seen.

## VERSE 10.

*I have ſent among you the Peſtilence after the manner of Egypt, your young men have I ſlain with the ſword, and have taken away your horſes, and I have made the ſtink of your Camps to come up into your noſtrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.*

**I**N this Verſe we have a Fourth and Fifth Rod, where-wich the Lord chaſtend this ſtubborn people, viz. the *Peſtilence*, and the *Sword*. Before they were ſmitten with the *Famine*, which rich men many times feel nor; now follows the *Plague* and *Sword*, as uſual Concomitants on the former; hence all theſe three are ſo oft joyned together in Scripture. Theſe meet with the rich, as well as the poor; yea the *Sword* aymes principally at rich men; Souldiers doe not uſe to enquire, where dwells the poor man, but where dwells the Uſurer, the rich Oppreſſor, &c. the poor ſcape beſt many times in ſuch combuſtions, Jer. 39. 20.

*Q. The Queſtion will be, what Peſtilence this was, and when it fell upon Iſrael?*

*A. 1.* It is conceived that the Peſtilence of *Egypt* here meant, was not any one particular Plague, but a complication of Plagues; and ſpecially the Fifth and Tenth Plague of *Egypt*, which brought *Murrain on the Cattle*, and *Mortality on men*. Firſt, there was ſo great and ſo grievous a deſtruction of Cattel, that all the Horſes, Aſſes, Camels, and all the Cattel of *Egypt* dyed (*Exod. 9. 6, 9.*) 2 All their firſt-born dyed, there was not a houſe in which there was not one dead, *Exod. 12. 29. Pſal. 78. 30, 51.* ſo it was amongſt this people, there was a ſore ſlaughter both of men and horſes. The Prophet ſeems to allude to the dayes of King *Jeboahaz* King of *Iſrael*; when the King of *Syria* made ſo great a ſlaughter amongſt them, that of the whole Army of *Iſrael* there were left but fifty Horſe-men, ten Chariots, and ten thouſand Foot, all the reſt were deſtroyed, and made like the duſt by thręſhing (*2 King. 13. 7.*) Hereupon the Air was corrupted, and the loathſome ſtench of ſo many dead Bodies, helpt to bring the Peſtilence amongſt them.

M

In

See my Com.  
on Hoſ. 13. 16.  
and ten p. 143.

In this Verse wee have these parts considerable.  
 1 The Judgements inflicted, which are two.

1 The Pestilence.

2 The Sword.

2 Here is the nature of this *Pestilence*, it is not an ordinary one, but it is a most noysome, grievous, deadly Pestilence; such a one as God inflicted upon his professed enemies, the *Egyptians*, when Man and Beast suddenly dyed. *Jeroboam* when he was in *Egypt* learnt the Worship of the golden Calves, this he taught to *Israel*, and having made them like the *Egyptians* in Idolatry and Sin, the Lord now makes them alike in Judgement, *I have sent amongst you the Pestilence, after the manner of Egypt.* The words in the fountain

*Deber, Pestis*, see this word fully explained by Mr. Greenhill on Ezek. 5. 12. P. 455. Fuller's Miscel. l. 1. cap. 7. p. 50. *Bederck, in via, exponi potest per Kederck, i. e. in star via, vel secundum viam, i. e. secundum rationem, modum & morem Egypti. A lapide. Achurim, electos vestros i. e. juvenes, ita dicantur a dilectu, quod ad bellum & negotia deligi soleant. Mercer.*

are, I have smitten you with Pestilence in the way of *Egypt*, it is an Hebraism used in other places, as *Isa. 10. 24, 26. Ezek. 20. 30.* and is as much as *after the manner of Egypt*, as our Translation renders it well, *q. d.* As I sent sore Plagues upon the *Egyptians*, in like severity will I deal with you, who have walked in their obstinacy and Idolatry.

3 Here is the special Object, or the Persons slain by the Sword, and these are their young and strong men, *Your young men have I slain with the sword.* Young men are for Warre, and more fit for service than old men, by reason of their strength, spirit, boldness, and activity; Old men are for counsel, and young men for action. Young men in the height of their bloud sin with more heat and violence, and so their sins are more displeasing unto God; and therefore he oft cuts them off in the height of their sin.

4 Here are two Adjuncts and Concomitants which usually attend upon Warre; the first is the loss of horses, *I have taken away your horses*, and carried them into captivity, with your haughty young men who trusted in them. These are the strength of the barrail, but the Riders being taken, the Horses must needs be taken with them.

2 Loathsome stench, and noysome smells, I have made the stench of your Camps *to come up into your nostrils*; partly by such as dyed of the Plague, and partly by the multitude of men and horses that were slain, and lay unburied, and so infected the air.

*Refo, significat putredinem & fetorem.*

5 Here



5 Here is the old complaint continued still, yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Though yee have been thus sadly smitten with all my great Rods, yet all my labour is but lost upon you, for you still contemn the remedy of your recovery, and have not yet returned unto me saith the Lord.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 When lesser Rods will not mend a people, God usually comes with greater. Blasting, Mildew, Palmer-worms did not work upon this People, and now comes Pestilence and Sword, Gods great Rods to destroy them utterly.

See more in  
my Com. on  
Hos. 13. 16.  
p. 68.

2 Obs. Judgements, especially great ones, seldom goe alone, Sword, Plague, Famine, often goe together. As men multiply Sins, so God multiplies Plagues; and as they have variety of sins, so he hath variety of punishments, as I have shewed before on Verf. 8. Obs. 2.

3 Obs. Parity of Sin, brings parity of Judgement. The Egyptians were obstinate Idolaters, no Plagues could work upon them, therefore God destroyed them. And this was Israels case, they were obstinate Idolaters like the Egyptians, and now God follows them with Plague upon Plague as hee did them, I have sent upon you Pestilence after the manner of Egypt. They were incurable and incorrigible like the Egyptians, and now God smites them with Egyptian Plagues, according to that threatning, Deut. 28. 62. I will cause the diseases of Egypt to cleave unto thee. Sin hardens Gods heart against his people, and makes him deal with them, as hee useth to doe with his enemies. It turns him, who is our best friend, into the saddest foe. That power which he used in destroying his peoples enemies, if his people forsake him, and rebel against him, hee will exert that power in destroying them. Thus the Lord used here the same weapons of his wrath against his people, as before hee used in destroying the Egyptians.

And may not England now fear, lest that power, which the Lord hath shewed in the saving of us from the hands of unreasonable men, should now bee turned against us for our Blasphemies, and Apostacies, and as we have partaken with Germanies sins, and Polands sins, and Irelands sins; so wee

should be made like them for plagues. Wee have given the Lord just cause by our provocations to turn his hand against us, and to consume us after he hath done us good. (*Jos. 24. 30.*) And as hee hath made us the head, so now hee might make us the tayl; and as he hath made us the terror of the Nations, so now he may justly make them a terror to us for our ungrateful, dis-ingenuous walking towards him.

4 Obs. *The Pestilence comes more immediately from God;* It is his Messenger, it is commanded and commissioned by God, to goe to such and such Families, Towns, and Persons, that so if any one ask, How came the Pestilence here, why *I sent it said God;* it is a servant of his sending, *2 Sam. 24. 15* and an Arrow of his shooting, *Psal. 91. 5.* with this hee wounds, kills, and consumes his enemies, *Ezek. 5. 16, 17.* The Plague is not *Casual*; but *Providential*; there is a Divine hand of immediate Providence in this Judgement; as there is no evil of affliction in the City, so much less this signal evil; but it comes from God, *Amos 3. 6.* It is he that decrees it, he increaseth it, and he removes it, how and when he pleaseth. Hence it is called his *Sword*, *1 Chron. 21. ult.* it is not the sword of a weak man; but of an Almighty God, which none can resist or fly from; it is his *Hand* out of which none can deliver us, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* Moses tells Pharaoh, that if he refuse to let Israel goe, behold *the hand of the Lord*, i. e. the Plague shall light on thy Cattel, *Exod. 9. 3.* this hand of his will finde out all his enemies, *Psal. 21. 8.* this is a sign of Gods great Wrath: God brings not out this great Rod, till men have greatly provoked him by their great sins, *Numb. 11. 33. & 16. 46, 47. Levit. 26. 25. Deut. 32. 23, 24.*

As 1. *Idolary.* This is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying Sin, and brings the Plague upon a Land, *Psal. 106. 29. Ezek. 5. 11, 12. Rev. 16. 2, 11.*

2 *Contempt of Gods Word and wayes,* *Deut. 28. 21. Jer. 29. 18, 19.*

3 *Fornication and uncleanness.* For this Sin God cut off twenty four thousand of the *Israelites* with the Pestilence, *Numb. 25. 9.* men will not judge and punish such, but God will, *Heb. 13. 4.*

4 *Murmuring and unbelief;* when men repine at Gods dispensations, and will teach him how to rule the World; this

this brings the Plague, *Numb. 14. 2. 3. 11. 12. 36. 37. Or 16. 46.*

5 *Persecuting Gods Ministers and people.* Pharaoh, that persecuted Israel, had variety of Plagues laid on him. God shoots this Arrow especially at such, *Psal. 7. 13. Jer. 29. 18. Or 38. 2.* The Heathen Emperours which persecuted the Christians, were punisht with great Plagues.

6 *Prophanation of holy things.* This brought the Pestilence (as it is conceived) upon the *Corinthians, 1. Cor. 11. 30.* he will be sanctified of all that draw nigh unto him; in mercy; if they come preparedly: in judgement, if they come irreverently.

Wee should therefore be careful by unfeigned Repentance, and Humiliation to remove Sin which is the cause, and then the Plague which is but the effect will soon cease; but without this, all Physick, flying, washings, burning, &c. are but vain. Till God bee appealed, the Plague will never bee appeased; till we humble our selves before him, he will not heal us, *2 Chron. 7. 13, 14.* till by faith we fly unto him, he will not hide us from the Pestilence, *Psal. 91. 1. to 8.*

1 This speaks *Terror* to the wicked and impenitent; they have not to doe with men in this Judgement, but with God, who is a consuming fire; and from whom there is no flying, *Amos 9. 1. to 5.* when men oppose men, they may make some resistance; but when *Omnipotency* comes against *Impotency*, and the *Creator* against the *Creature*, whose heart can be strong, or whose hands endure? *Ezek. 22. 14.* The Plague, when it seizeth upon a man in wrath, it is a *Terrible Judgement*, and that in many respects.

1 In respect of *pain*, it torments men with terrible burning, in so much that many run mad, and make away themselves; yea and the stronger men are, usually the sooner they are cut off by the Pestilence; It is a noysome, loathsome Disease; hence called, *The noysome Pestilence, Psal. 91. 3.* and if any doe recover, yet are they seldome well; Some lose their Hearing, some their Sight, some their Memory, most carry the prints of it with them to their Graves. It is a woful Judgement, and brings with it woful fears; woful sorrows, woful desolation; and woful terrours, even the terrours of death.

1 It is a Judgement that seldom goes alone, but is attended with famine, poverty, depopulation, ruine, *Jer. 22. 8. 9. & 28. 8. Ezek. 14. 31.*

3 It deprives us of many choyse Blessings, which in other distresses men doe enjoy.

5 It deprives us of the liberty of Gods House and Ordinances. A sad affliction; much lamented by David, Psalm 42. & 84.

2 It deprives us of our Callings, so that we cannot serve God in them, which is one great end why a good man desires to live.

3 Of the comfort of Friends, which in other Diseases they enjoy. Two are better than one, and woe to him that is alone.

4 The suddenness of it addes much to its terror, it slayes thousands suddenly; we read of seventy thousand slaine in three dayes, *2 Sam. 24. 15.* it is an Arrow that flies speedily, *Psal. 91. 5.* In *Senacheribs* host in one night there dyed of the Plague (as some conceive) one hundred fourscore and five thousand men, *2 King. 19. 35.*

See B. Halls  
Balm of Gile-  
ad, p. 173.

2 It may comfort the Godly, that they have not to doe with unreasonable men, whose tender mercies are cruelties; but with a gracious God, who in the midst of his Judgements remembers mercy. It is the Cup which their Father gives them, it is his Hand, his Arrow, his Messenger; hee sends, he orders, he moderates, and mittigates it; He bids it goe, and it goes; stay, and it staies, *2 Sam. 34. 15, 16.* It is a mercy when the Lord corrects us himself, and doth not sell us into the hand of Slaves who have no mercy. This made David chuse the Plague rather than the Sword, *2 Sam. 24. 14.* God keeps his people safe in the very midst of the Pestilence, when thousands, and ten thousands fall round about them, *Psal. 91. 7.* many a wicked man flies, and the Plague overtakes him; many a good man stayes, and God preserves him.

Q. The Question then will be, whether it be unlawful to fly in time of Pestilence?

A. 1. Some hold it utterly unlawful, because our dayes are numbred, and as wee cannot prolong our dayes, so wee cannot shorten them, *Job 7. 1. & 14, 15.* This reason will not

nor hold, for it is no *trusting*, but a *tempting* of God, it is rashness and presumption to run into danger because our days are numbred. A man may not goe into the Fire, nor cast himself into the Water, or goe meet a Lion or a Bear, because God hath determined how long we shall live. Christ would not tempt God, by casting himself down from the Pinnacle, as the Devil would have had him, *Matth. 4. 6, 7.* As God hath ordained the end, so he hath ordained the means to bring us to that end; as God hath determined our dayes, so he hath determined that wee shall fly dangers, and hurtful things which may shorten our dayes. When *Saul* threw a Javelin at *David* he fled from him, *1 Sam. 19. 10.* wee see men fly from Sword and Famine, and why not from the Pestilence when God gives us an opportunity?

Nature teacheth every Creature to preserve it self from danger, and if the Lord should reveal it to us, that we should be safe from the Plague, yet we must use the means. *Noah* knew he should not be drowned in the Flood, and yet hee builds an Ark; *Paul* knew that God would save him, and his Partners in the Ship, yet they must use the means, and row towards the shore, *Acts 27. 34, 38, 39, 40.*

2 Obj. Charity commands us to visit the Sick, and to help our Neighbours in their distress.

Ans. Charity begins at home, I may not to help my Neighbour kill my self, and my family, by rash and presumptuous running into infected places without a call. Hee that commands that I should not kill another, commands also that I should not kill my self. The Plagues of God are terrible, and not to be played withall. In the time of the Law we see how careful the Lord was of the safety of his people, *Levit. 15. 45.* he commanded that the Leper should bee separated from others, he sets down signs how they should know it, hee must wear a different garment, and must cry, *I am unclean, unclean;* now if in the Leprosie which was a less infectious disease, and not deadly, such care was to be used, how much more in the Pestilence.

3 We may visit them by others, and send our charity by such as are appointed to tend them; and though in body wee are absent from them, yet we may and must sympathize with them, and by writing, praying, directing, providing of food and

*Providentia  
Dei non tollit  
causas secundas,  
sed eas  
statuit, quia per  
eas decreta sua  
exequitur.  
Zanchy.  
Legitima media  
non obfistunt  
divina provi-  
dentia, sed ei  
subordinantur.  
D. Geo. Abbot.  
Thesis quinta.  
Omni animali-  
um generi a  
natura tribu-  
tum est, ut se  
corpus, et vi-  
tam tueatur.  
Cicero.*

and Physick for them; we may and must according to our places and abilities help them.

3 Obj. *We must shew unbelief, but this flying argueth weakness of faith, as if we could not be safe unless we fly.*

Ans. A pious use of the means, which God hath ordained for our safety, doth not destroy but establish faith. I beleeve, that God will preserve my life, yet I feare and drink, and must use means notwithstanding, else I should not trust, but tempt God.

2 We must distinguish.

1 There is a *flight of Diffidence*, and contempt of Gods Judgements, as if we would fly from his hand and presence, that it should not over-take us, and this is Atheistical.

2 There is a *Prudential, providential, religious flight*, when God gives us a way to escape, and to provide for our selves and our families, and this must thankfully be embraced; for *David* had strong faith, and yet he was afraid of the Pestilence, 1 *Chron.* 21. ult.

4 Obj. *Yet David did not fly from it.*

Ans. 1. He was a Magistrate, and so bound by his place to abide amongst his people. 2. It continued but a short time, but three days. 3. It was his fault more especially that procured it. 4. Hee could not fly out of his Kingdom, unless he would fly into his enemies hands.

2 We must therefore *distinguish of Persons.*

1 Some are set by God in place of Publick trust, as Magistrates, Ministers, Over-seers of the Poor, &c. These must not fly, but must keep their places, that they may suppress disorders, and by their Government, Counsel, and Prayers, they multiply in the breach, as *Moses* and *Aaron* did, *Numb.* 16. 46, 47. now when a man hath this Call, hee may keep his station with comfort and courage; for the Lord hath promised to keep us whilst we keep our wayes, as appears in that precious ninety first Psalm, the most comfortable of all the Psalmes in times of Pestilence; God can destroy the *Agyptians* by it, and yet preserve his people. How many Midwives, Physicians, and renderers of infected persons, some of which have laine in the same bed with infected persons, yet being called by God to the service, have been preserved from infection. Or, if a good man should dye of the Pestilence, yet being

Shun two  
rocks, 1. *Stultitiam temeritatem.* 2. *Nimum timorem.*  
*Si Pestis imminet, fugiat qui vult, ac precipue isti qui sunt pavidi.*  
Luther.



being found in Gods way, he is blessed, *Rev. 14. 13. Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord*, whether they dye of the Plague, or by the Sword, or Famine, it matters not, so they dye in the fear and favour of God.

*Caution.* Not that a Magistrate or Minister is bound in person to goe visit infected Persons, for then he makes himself incapable of Publick imployment. and the Ministers Auditors will be afraid to come hear him; so that in this case the Publick good must be preferred before a private, and a greater good before a less. That good man *Bullinger* going to visit one infected with the Plague, brought it home to his family, so that his Wife and two Daughters dyed of it. The Church of God, and our own Families, are to be preferred before any private person; Publick persons are set over a Society, and not over one or two. Hence when *David* would have gone out with his Souldiers to battle, the people answer, *Thou shalt not goe, for thou art worth ten thousand of us*, 2 Sam. 18. 3. But private persons who are free, and have no publick tye by duty or charity to stay, they are free, and may for a time absent themselves if they please.

*Charitatem laudo, non famam, Zanchini in Psal. 2. 30. ubi plura.*

5 Obj. *I am a godly man, and God hath promised that such shall not dye of the plague*, Psa. 91. 10.

*Ans.* God hath no where promised an absolute freedome to his people from the Pestilence, but only conditionally, viz. so farre as it shall be good for them; indeed he alwayes preserves his people from the evil of it, so that it shall never be a Plague, or a Curse, but a fatherly correction to them; and so the Promise is fulfilled. *There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall the Plague come nigh thy dwelling*, viz. as an evil or curse, Psa. 91. 10. The evil is alwayes taken away from the godly, and the sting pulled out, and God makes it up to them in some better kind. By it he takes them away from greater evils, and makes the Pestilence like *Elijahs* fiery Chariot, to convey them more speedily to heaven. In respect of outward afflictions, all things come alike to all. *Eccles. 9. 2.* the same Sythe cuts down good corn and weeds, but for a different end and purpose. We may not therefore censure them all as wicked men that are visited with the Plague, for God may try his dearest Servants in this kind. *David, Job, Hezekiah*, and the *Corinthians* are conceived to have been visited all in this



kind. *Bullinger* had it, *Beza* had it three times, *Junius* and his pious Wife dyed of it, and a thousand holy men and women dyed of it in *Cyprians* time. What is for our profit wee patiently bear, this is sent for good to good men, and as all other things, so this shall turn to their everlasting good,  
 • *Rom.* 8. 28.

[ See more of the Plague in *Rivet* on *Psal.* 91. D. *Bound* on *Psal.* 20. *Atterfol* on *Numb.* 14. 11. p. 597. folio. Dr. *Gouge* his *Arrows*, p. 1, &c. *Robertson* on 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. Mr. *Clerks* *Mirror*, chap. 98. folio. *Et pra aliis* *Binchii Melificium Theologicum*, Loc. 12. P. 2, pag. 142, &c. ]

5 Obs. It is God that sends Warre upon a disobedient people. This is his last and worst Rod, which hee brings forth against obstinate sinners, *Levit.* 26. 25. *Deut.* 28. 25. *Judg.* 2. 13, 14. & 3. 8. & 4. 1, 2. & 6. 1. & 10. 6, 7. & 13. 1. *Esa.* 42. 24, 25. *Jer.* 15, 6, 7. *Ezek.* 14. 17. 21,

This may inform us that Warre is lawfull.

1 It is that which God commanded, *Deut.* 20. 1 *Sam.* 23. 2.

2 It is commended in the Saints. *Abraham* fought against four Kings, and conquered them; *Moses* warred against the *Amalakites*, and prevailed against them; *Joshua* fought against the *Canaanites*, and subdued them; *Gideon* fought against the *Midianites*; *Jephthah* against the *Ammonites*; *Sampson* and *David* fought against the *Philistims*, and God prospered them all, and they returned the praise of these Victories unto God, who teacheth his peoples hands to warre, *Psal.* 144. 1. and directs them in the battle, *Josh.* 6. 2, 3, 4. hee is their Captain, *Josh.* 5. 14. he gives them success, *Psal.* 144. 10. *Heb.* 11. 33, 34. *Revel.* 17. 14. so that the *Anabaptists* who condemn Warre as sinful, doe charge God with Sin, and so are guilty of indirect blasphemy at least.

Obj. Warre might be lawfull in the Old Testament, but is is unlawful in the New Testament.

Ans. This is *Gratis dictum*, it is said, but it is not proved, yea the contrary appears by Christ himself, who commends the Centurions faith (*Matth.* 8. 20.) without any bidding him leave his Military employement, which doubtless he would have done had it been sinful; by this wee see, that warring and beleiving may well subsist together in the same man.

John

*John Baptift* teacheth the Souldiers how they should behave themselves in their stations, which he would not have done had the calling it self been unlawful, *Luke 3. 13, 14.* neither did *Peter* dissuade *Cornelius* from his Military kind of life, but Baptized him without any injunction of forsaking his Military station, which had it been unlawful hee would have done, *Acts 10. 1, 2, 4.* Besides, in the New Testament, the Magistrate must not bear the sword in vain, but must be a terror to those that doe evil; and this he could not be, if he did not raise Armies sometimes against the Sons of *Belial* that rise against him. Yea the Anabaptists themselves in *Germany*, when they had once got power into their hands, they defended themselves by Armes, and made foul spoyle where they came.

Obj. God would not suffer *David* to build him an house, because he was a Warrior, and had shed much blood, *1 Chron. 22. 8.* but *Solomon* a Prince of peace must doe it.

Ans. The Temple was to be a Type of the Church the proper subject of peace, and therefore *Solomon* a Prince of peace must build it, who was also a Type of Christ the Prince of peace, and in this respect *David* could not be a Type of Christ, because he had shed much blood. Not that God doth here condemn *David* for fighting his Battles, for he had Gods command, assistance, and approbation for what he did; but because the Temple was to be a Type and Figure of the Church, whereof Christ is head, therefore *Solomon* a man of Peace must build it.

Obj. We are commanded not to resist evil.

Ans. Such places speak against private revenge, and not against the Magistrates Power, who is appointed by God to be a terror and punisher of such as doe evil; as I have at large *In my Com. on Psal. 82. 1. p. 26* shewed elsewhere.

Obj. In the Primitive times the Church suffered Persecution, without any defending of themselves by any other armes than prayers and tears.

Ans. Those times and our times differ; for in those Primitive times the Magistrate that should have defended the Church, was an utter enemy to it, and they might not take the Sword out of his hand, but must patiently suffer. But wee live under a Christian Magistrate, who calls for our assistance against the enemies of the Church, which call,

(when rightly Circumstantiated) we are bound to obey.

[ See the lawfulness of Warre proved in thirteen particulars, by Dr. *Gouge* in his Arrows, p. 209. 2 P. and in M. *Ley* his Fast Ser. on *Jer.* 4. 21, 22. p. 11. &c. Preacht 1643. *Sharpus* Loc. Com. Loc. 43. Q. 10. p. 246. *Tactica Sacra*, cap. 6. ff. 9. p. 163, 164. see fifteen Anabaptistical Cavils refuted by *Peter Martyr* on 2 *Sam.* 2. 24. *mibi* p. 193. and Dr. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 210. ]

2 This must deeply *humble* us when even the Sword lies on us, since we have not only to doe with men, but with the great God in it; it is he that raiseth Warre against us, and layeth this *fore* Judgement on us, and is therefore called the *hurtful Sword*, *Psal.* 144. 10. the *powerful Sword*, *Job* 5. 20. the *oppressive Sword*, *Jer.* 46. 16. the *devouring Sword*, which destroyes from one end of a Land unto another, *Jer.* 12. 12. Warre is the saddest of Judgements, as having usually all other Judgements attending on it, with confusion, Robbing, Rapes, Plundring, Firing of Townes, devastation of Countries, Imprisonment of mens Persons, doleful Our-cryes, and confused Noyses, with Garments rolled in blood, (*Isa.* 9. 5.) when there is measuring of Cloth by the long ell, i. e. the Pike, and no Lawes can be heard for Drums. This turns a Garden of *Eden* into a desolate Wilderness (*Joel* 2. 3.) as we see in *Germany*, *Savoy*, *Poland*, &c.

See seventeen Sins which bring Warre upon a Land, *Binchius* Mel. lib. Theolog. Loc. 12. P. 2. p. 134.

*Beati ingressum, progressum, & egressum à Deo, Binchius.*

Let us therefore beware of provoking the Lord by our sins, to bring this direful Judgement on us. Let us judge our selves, and so prevent this Judgement, *Judg.* 10. 10. and put our mouths in the dust if there may be hope, *Lam.* 3. 26. let us by our Prayers and Tears first conquer God, and then we shall quickly conquer all; *Psal.* 81. 13, 14. It is he only that raised our Warres, that can make them cease; it is hee that gives the Sword its commission; and till hee take away its commission, it will not cease. It is he that maketh Warres to cease not only at home, but also abroad, even to the ends of the earth, *Psal.* 46. 9. It is not men that put an end to War, for if some might have their way we should never have peace; like *Salamanders* they love to live in the fire of warre and contention; these are Monsters, not Men; *Dauids* Prayer shall be mine, *Scatter the people that delight in warre*. It is the Lord that subdues our enemies, and creates peace for his people.

Hence

Hence *Moses* in that excellent Song ascribes all to God, (*Exod. 15. 1. to 14.*) *The Lord* hath triumphed gloriously, *He* (not we) hath thrown the Horse and his Rider into the Sea, *He* is our strength, *He* is our Salvation, *Thou* Lord hast overthrown them, *Thou* hast destroyed them, *Thou* hast delivered thy people, &c. when ever therefore we want Peace, let us goe to this God of peace, and by Prayer and patience wait on him, who can with a word of his mouth speak us into peace, and make all warres to cease amongst us.

[ See more concerning Warre., in *Gerards* Loc. Com. de Magistratu, Tom. 2. folio, p. 416. in fine libri. Dr. *Gouge* his Arrows, p. 177. *Clerks* Mirror, chap. 134. B. *Halls* Cases of Consc. Decad. 2. cha. 9. *Grotius* de Jure belli. B. *Babington* on *Exod. 17. 1.* *Binchius* Mellif. Theolog. Loc. 12. p. 133. P: 2. see sixteen excellent Sermons in Latine on this subject, by *Sibelinus*, on *Exod. 17. 1.* &c. 1 Vol. folio, p. 216, 217, &c. ]

6 Obs. *Obstinate sinning provokes the Lord to cut off young men.* Your young men have I slaine with the sword. Their Sins are acted with more impetuous violence, and so are more displeasing unto God. As God is much delighted with the obedience of young men, when they can break through many difficulties to serve him (*Jer. 2. 2.*) so he is greatly displeased with the heady, haughty, outrageous courses of young men, whom no counsel will reclaime, nor warning amend. That age which is most prone to sin, is nearest to Judgement; and when God shall awaken Conscience, and set the sins of thy youth in order before thee, then thy mirth will be turned into mourning, and thy joy into heaviness, *Eccles. 11. 9.* When young men dishonour God, and preferre the Devil his profest enemy before him, giving the wine and flower of their dayes to the Devil, and the dreggs to God; hee will give such up to spiritual Judgements, and take no pleasure in them, *Isa. 9. 17.* *I will not joy in your young men*; implying, that when young men walk in Gods way, they are Gods joy and delight, but when they are proud, prophane, idle, unclean, &c. then comes the Feaver, the Plague, the Sword, and cuts them off; such rude rebellious persons shall not live out half their dayes. When *Israel* fell to Idolatry, then a fire consumed their young men, *Psaln 78. 63.* and when they

grow obstinate and incorrigible, as in the text, then the Sword destroyes them.

Oh that Young men then would be perswaded to *fly from the lusts of youth*, deny themselves betimes, and make the Lord the God of their youth, and then hee will bee the God of their old age, hee will never leave them, nor forsake them.

See more in  
my Com. on  
2 Tim 3. 15.  
  
*Adjuncta cap-  
tivate equo-  
rum. Heb.*

7 Obs. *Sin robs us of our Creature-comforts.* Before they lost their Young men, and now they lose the Horses, and the Riders too; *your Horses are gone into captivity*, and are taken from you. A Horse in it self is a useful creature, it Fights for us, Draws for us, and Carries us up and down; but sin robs us of them, and makes them unsuccessful and vaine, *Psal. 33. 17.* These *Israelites* had trusted in their Horses, (*Hos. 14. 3.*) and now God makes them sensible of their folly, in trusting to creatures that cannot profit them, nor save them in a time of trouble. God had left them, and now Peace leaves them, Horses leave them, Plenty leaves them, and their Young men which were the strength of their Battle, leave them; so sad it is with people when God departs from them, *Hos. 7. 13.*

8 Obs. *Noysome stench is a punishment for sin*, *Isa. 34. 3;* *Joel 2. 20.* As we have abused all our Senses, so God may justly punish us in them all.

Bless the Lord then for the Winds, those *Fans of the world*, which are a means to keep the Air pure from infection, which otherwise with Damps and ill sentes would poyson us every moment.

#### VERSE II.

*I have over-thrown (some) of you [or some amongst you] as God over-threw Sodom and Gomorrah, and yee were as a fire-brand pluckt out of the burning, yet have yee not returned to me, saith the Lord.*

**V**VE are now come to the Sixth and last Rod which God wasted on this stubborn People in vain, and that is the subversion of their Cities. *I have over-thrown some of*

of you, &c. Where we have, first the Judgement executed, viz. *the subversion of some of their Cities*. Some read the words Prophetically, as if they were a Propheſie of ſome Judgement to come, q. d. I will raiſe up *Salmaſer* the King of *Aſſyria*, who ſhall beſiege *Samarra*, and take it, and ſhall ſubdue the Kingdome of *Iſrael*. But this is clear againſt the text and context, for the word is in the Preterit Tenſe, and not in the Future; it is not I will, but I have overthrown your Cities; and yet yee have not returned unto me; which clearly ſhews that he ſpeaks of Judgements paſt, and ſuch as had been ineffectual upon them, and therefore he goes on to threaten more grievous things againſt them. But now, *thus will I do unto thee, &c.*

*Hapachti, ſub-*  
*verti, vel ever-*  
*ti 201. i. e. ci-*  
*vitates veſtras.*  
*Met. ſubj. Poſ-*  
*ſeſſores pio-*  
*poſſeſſa.*

2 Here is the *Author* of this ſubverſion, viz. *the Lord*, I have overthrown ſome of you as God overthrew *Sodom*, q. d. As I overthrew *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, ſo have I overthrown your Cities. God ſpeaks of himſelf according to the Hebrew Dialect in the third Perſon, ſetting forth thereby his Honour, and his power in this ſignal Judgement. The like expreſſion we have, *Gen. 19. 24. The Lord rained fire and brimſtone upon Sodom from the Lord*; that is, from himſelf. It is an Hebraiſm, when a Noun is put for a Pronoun, the more emphatically to expreſs that it was not by Accident, or any ordinary courſe of Nature, but by the immediate and almighty Power of God, that ſuch ſhowers of Fire came upon them.

3 Here is the dreadfulneſs of this ſubverſion, it was like the deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*. As God made them examples of terrour to all the wicked in ſucceeding Generations, by conſuming them with fire from Heaven (2 Pet. 2. 6. Jude 7.) ſo the Lord brought thoſe *Iſraelites* to the very brink of utter ruine and deſtruction.

Q. Wee read of no Cities in all the Scriptures, that ever the Lord deſtroyed with fire and brimſtone immediately from Heaven, but only *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, upon whom he brought the ſaddeſt and moſt ſupendious deſtruction that ever we read of; how then are theſe Cities ſaid to be deſtroyed like them?

Anſ. It is an Hyperbolical ſpeech, frequently uſed in Scripture, to ſet forth the moſt terrible deſolation, and dreadfull deſtroyed that can befall a People, and there-  
fore

Synecdoche.  
Speci.

fore when the Holy Ghost would set forth the signal Wrath of God against a place, he tells us it was like the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*. Thus it sets forth the destruction of *Babylon*, *Isa.* 13. 19. & *Jer.* 50. 40. and so of *Moab* and *Ammon*, *Zeph.* 2. 9. so that it is a Figurative speech, and must not be taken Literally, but Allusively; *Sodom's* destruction is put for dreadful and extream desolation; and doth denote rather the measure of Gods displeasure, than the manner of the punishment, so *Isa.* 1. 9. *Jer.* 49. 18. *Hos.* 11. 8. *Israel* here was brought so low, and to such extreamity by their enemies, that their destruction seemed like that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and those that escaped out of those great trials were so few, that they seemed like a brand pulled out of the fire. This seems to relate to that time when God raised up *Hazaël*, and the *Syrians*, who smote *Israel* in all their Coasts, burnt their Cities, laid wast *Gilead* and *Basshan*, killed their young men, slew their Children, ript up their Women with Child, oppressed them in their Estates and Persons, so that they became like the dust by threshing, that is, very weak and contemptible; their strong Holds were lost, and they had no Humane helper; they had but fifty Horse-men left, and ten Chariots, and ten thousand Foot, a poor Guard for a Kingdome. To so low an ebbe were they brought, as appears *2 King.* 10. 32, 33. & *2 King.* 13. 3r-7, 20, 22. & 14. 26.

Torris ab incendio. Proverb.

4 Here is Gods mercy to *Israel*, set forth by a kind of correction or mitigation; yee were indeed like *Sodom*, yet not altogether like *Sodom*, for all their Cities were burnt and none escaped; but the Lord hath spared your Metropolis, and chief City *Samaria*, and pulled some of you as a brand out of the fire, q. d. when you were in a very low and lost condition, being like a peece of Timber half burnt, yet then had I pity on you, and remembered my Covenant, and rescued you out of your present misery by the hand of *Jeroboam* the second, the Son of *Joash*, even as a brand out of the flame, and saved a remnant of you from the sword (*2 King.* 14. 25.) To pull one as a brand out of the fire is a Proverbial speech, and signifies the great danger which a man is in. Thus *Joshua* the High Priest, whom the Lord delivered out of the *Babylonian* fiery Furnace, is called, *A brand pluckt out of the fire*, *Zach.* 3. 2.



5 Here is their horrid obstinacy still under this hideous and Rependous Judgement, *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* This is *Versus intercalaris*, the usual burden of Gods sad complaint, though he had sent amongst them *Egyptian* Plagues, and *Sodomitical* destructions, yet so obdurate were they, that neither the one nor the other could work upon them.

The sum of all is this, *That I might leave no means unassayed (saith the Lord) to reclaim you, I have added this to all the rest of my Judgements, that I have overthrown some of your Cities, and brought you so low, that you were almost like Sodom and Gomorrah, and you of Samaria were left out of the common destruction, as a brand taken out of the fire, yet all this hath not moved you to return unto me, saith the Lord.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *If the Word of God work not upon mens hearts, neither will Judgements work upon them.* These people had *Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Joel, Micah, Hosea, Amos*, to preach to them, but their Ministry was ineffectual, and now wee see that no Judgement can work upon them. Those that are *Sermon-proof*, and will not beleeve the Word of God, will quickly be *Judgement-proof*, and contemn Gods Sword. Those that have *Moses* and the *Prophets*, and yet will not beleeve them, neither will they beleeve though one should arise from the dead, *Luke 16. ult.* If a man should come roaring from Hell, it would affright men, but it is easier to fright men out of their wits, than out of their sins. *Lazarus* rose from the dead, yet the Pharisees were so farre from being bettered thereby, that they grew madder against Christ. So at the Resurrection of Christ, many arose, and appeared to many, and no doubt but they told them, how it was with those that were dead, and yet it could not work upon them. He that cavils at the Word, will also cavil at Miracles, as the Pharisees did at the Miracles of Christ. He that will not beleeve the Spirit of God speaking in the Prophets, will not beleeve a man pretending that he came from the Dead, and telling what the Damned suffer there. How should he beleeve a Creature, that will not beleeve the infallible testimony of his Creator?

The Scriptures are a surer ground for us to build upon, than an Angels voyce ( *2 Pet. 1. 19.* ) No revelations are to be compared to them, God will never set in with wayes of

*Versus intercalaris dicitur, qui frequenter post aliquantulum interponitur versus.*

*Qui adeo induratus est, ut Scriptura non eadeat, nec mortuis resurgentibus credat.*

*Stella*

mens invention, when they despise the waies of his own Ordination. The blind world which is weary of true Doctrine, is apt to think, that if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell would come and teach them, then they should bee converted. These are like *Saul*, who contemned the counsel of *Samuel* living, yet desired to speak with him when he was dead. But, 1. why doe you not beleeeve Christ who dyed, and is risen from the dead, and speaks daily to you by his Ministers? 2. Why doe you not beleeeve the Prophets, who being dead yet speak to you, and have left us a more sure word of Prophecie? 3. Suppose one should come from Hell all in flames, and tell you what the Damned suffer there, yet how is it probable that this should doe you good, when God tells you the same thing in his Word, and yet you will not beleeeve him? It is most certain, that those who despise Gods Ordinance, will never beleeeve a report from a doubtful and erring authority. Desire not therefore Miracles, or Revelations and Enthusiasms, this is a tempting of God; but suffer God to teach thee in his own way, by his Word and Sacra-

\* *Si in manu mea res esset, non vellem Deum mibi loqui de caelo, aut apparere mibi; hoc autem vellem & quotidie precor, ut in honore digno habeam verbum & Sacramenta.* Luther.

ments; so did \* *Luther*, and this is the desire of all the Saints, that God would guide them with his counsel here, that is, with his VVord and Spirit, and so bring

them to glory, *Psal.* 73. 24. The conversion of a Sinner is not so much from the excellency of the means, or the abilities of the Speaker, as from the power of Gods Grace, which teacheth us to profit, and maketh the means effectual to us. Great then is the folly of those, who take upon them to teach God, how he should teach the VVorld; they would have Miracles and Angels to doe it, when God saies they shall have Ministers, and Preaching by men to doe it. It is a Satanical delusion for men to think of being converted, or comforted by any other way, than that which God himself hath prescribed.

If God hath planted thee under a godly and a faithful Ministry, and that cannot convert thee, then assure thy self if an Angel from Heaven, or a Ghost from Hell

*Non est necesse ut infernum descendam, & videam quomodo illic sapiat Divina iustitia; sufficit mihi ut eam in hoc mundo contempler.* Gringonensis.

should come and preach every Sabbath to thee thou wouldst not

not be converted. Sad is the condition then of many amongst us, who vilifie and contemn, who mock and scorne at the Preaching of the Word, accounting the publishers of it the Pests of a place, and the troublers of *Israel* (1 *King*. 18. 17.) grudging at their maintenance, and slaying their persons, this is a sign of remediless ruine to a Nation, 2 *Chron*. 36. 15, 16. *Levit*. 26. 14, 15, 16. *Jer*. 25. 4, 7, 8, 9. *Prov*. 13. 13.

2 Obse There is a Divine hand of Providence, that governs the world. This brings plenty and poverty, rain on one City, and not on another; one City is fired, and another is rescued, as a brand out of the fire. These things come not by chance, or fortune, but there is a signal providence of God in them all. Hee feeds the Sparrows, cloathes the Lillies, numbers our Hairs, and takes special care of his people. Hee hath a directing, protecting, compassionate, vindicating care over all his, he tenders them as the apple of his eye, and writes them upon the palms of his hands, they are ever in his sight, *Isa*. 49. 15. & 63. 9. *Ezek*. 16. 8. *Zach*. 2. 8. *Mal*. 3. 17. *Acts* 9. 4.

See M. Jenkins  
his Ser. on  
*Deut*. 32. 11

This Providence of God is

- 1 Watchful.
- 2 Distinct.
- 3 Strong.
- 4 VVise in working.

See all these  
Heads enlarged in Mr.  
*Robinsons* Ser.  
on *Psal*. 73. 24.  
p. 25. preached  
at a Funeral,  
1654.

We should therefore comfort our selves in this special Providence of God, and cast all our burdens of cares & fears on him. Hee that provides for the meanest creatures, will not suffer his noblest Creatures to want. He that provides for Sparrows, (said good Mr. *Herne* when he was dying, to his sad wife) will not suffer Hens to want. Yea he that provides so liberally for his enemies, what will he not doe for his friends? Away then with all carking, distrustful care, only commit thy way unto the Lord, and hee shall direct thy paths. Bee patient under all his Holy Lim-wrongs and injuries, remembering that Gods eye takes special notice of all the wrongs that are done to his people, to avenge them, *Exod*. 3. 9. 2 *Chron*. 16. 8, 9. Let our moderation be made known to all, since the Lord is at hand, *Phil*. 4. 5.

V. Godolphin  
his Holy Lim-  
beck, p. 207

[ See more of the Providence of God in Mr. *Perkins* on the Creed, Artic. 1. p. 154. folio. Vol. 1. *Peter Martyr* on

1 Sam. 10. p. 56, 57. Lessius de Attributis, p. 625. Dr. Gouge his Arrows, p. 373. Rutherford Lect. Latine, c. 12. p. 122. Corbet Fast Ser. on 1 Cor. 1. 27. p. 5, &c. Dyke on Matthe. 4. 4. p. 260, &c. Strong 31 select Ser. p. 657. Raworth Jacobs Ladder, p. 5, &c. B. Andrews Catechis. chap. 7. folio. mihi p. 29. Herberts Poems, p. 109, &c. Pemble, folio. p. 263. to 279. Minutius felix per totum. Par his Grounds of Divinity, p. 33, &c.]

3 Obs. *God is the destroyer of sinful Cities.* If you would know, who it is that overthrows your Cities, It is I saith the Lord, that in justice for your provocations have made your Cities a desolation; I fired *Sodom*, destroyed *No*, *Niniveh*, *Samarina*, *Babylon*, *Jerusalem*. As the Lord raiseth Cities, and defends the good (2 King. 19. 34. & 20. 6.) so he ruines and layes waste the bad, Hos. 13. 16. Luke 19. 44. keep sin then out of your Cities, if you desire to keep them from fire, plunder, ruine. Take heed of offending God, who is a consuming Fire, and can in a trice consume us, and turn our dwellings into ashes.

See my Com.  
on Hos. 13. 16.  
p. 70, 71.

4 Obs. *In the midst of Judgements God remembers mercy.* Hee doth not stirre up all his wrath, nor suffer his whole displeasure to arise, but lets fall only some drops upon us, when he might pour a whole Sea of wrath upon our heads, Psalm 78. 38. God might justly have destroyed all these Israelites for their Idolatry and Apostasie, yet he remembered his Covenant, though they had foully forgot it, and transgressed it (Hos. 6. 7.) and saves a remnant, he destroyed but some, nor all their Cities. So oft elsewhere we read of a remnant that were saved, 2 King. 19. 31. & Isa. 1. 9. & 10. 22. Rom. 9. 27.

5 Obs. *Neither Judgements nor Mercies can work upon hardened Sinners.* Some of these Israelites were destroyed like *Sodom*, and others in mercy were pulled like a Brand out of the fire; yet nothing works upon them, but they are *Israel* still, as Idolatrous and obstinate as ever. VVhen the heart is once hardened by a long custom of sinning, it is not all that Mount *Ebal*, or Mount *Gerizim*, Mount *Sinai*, or Mount *Sion* can afford; nor all the dreadful Curses of the one, nor all the gracious Promises of the other, that can work upon mens hearts, Prov. 23. 29, 34, 35. Ezek. 20. 5, 6, 7, 8, 18. 21. neither

neither *Johns* austerity, nor Christs lenity could work upon hard-hearted *Jews*. If God by his Spirit set not in with the means, nothing works kindly upon us; yea wee shall bee the worse for beating, as these *Israelites*, all these six Rods doe but stupifie them, and make them fitter for a greater Judgement. One rod being sanctified may bring a man home to God, as the Prison did *Manasses*, want the Prodigal, and the Earth-quake the Jaylor; they had Gods Spirit, that taught them to profit by afflictions, and so were blessed, *Psal.* 94. 12. but a thousand stripes on a *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, &c. doe but make them the more senseless and indurate; and is not this *Englands* Sin? may not we behold our own faces in this Glasse? may not the Lord justly complaine of us, as he doth here of *Israel*? I have smitten *England* with Sword, Plague, and Famine; some of their Towns and Cities I have fired, and the rest were as a brand pulled out of the fire. Many a time have I broken and blasted the Power and Policy of many great *Archbishops*, and delivered them from many eminent imminent dangers; and yet such is their incorrigibleness, and incurableness, that they have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. If any thing destroy this Nation, it is our obstinacy and impenitency, under all those various Dispensations of Mercies, and means which we have so long enjoyed. God like a good Physician, hath long studied our Disease, and given us many Purgative draughts to drink; he hath visited us with variety of Judgements, and hath let us blood several times, the better to obtain our Cure, and yet he may complaine of us as hee doth of *Israel* here, that we have not for all this returned to him.

## VERSE 12.

*Therefore thus will I doe unto thee, O Israel, and because  
I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God,  
O Israel.*

**W**EE have heard before of *Israels* Sin, and *Israels* Punishment for their sin. We are now come to the third and last part of this third Sermon of the Prophet, which contains an Exhortation, or Invitation to Repentance; where we have,

1 The Illative Particle, or the note of Inference, *Therefore*; The Lord draws a conclusion against them from the former Premises, *q. d.* since none of my former Judgements will reclaim you, I am now resolved, that you shall reap the fruit of your disobedience, you shall no longer be my People, but I will cast you out of Covenant, and send you into an impure Land; so that yee shall not only lose your Land, but your Religion too; not only your Soyl but your Souls to boot; not only your goods but your God. I have sent out my Footmen (saith God) and you have contemned them, and contended with them; I will now see, what you will doe with Horse-men (*Jer. 12. 5.*) I my self will now arise in armes against you, as against a pack of rebels.

2 Here is the Lords Commination of some greater Judgement, implied and couched in general terms, *Thus will I do unto thee.* The Lord seeing their incorrigibleness, goes on to denounce a sorer and sadder Judgement against them, than any yet had befallen them. He doth not tell them how, or in what kind he will punish them, but leaves them to imagine the worst, thereby intimating, that he would bring upon them sadder evils than they could imagine. *Thus* terribly, *thus* severely, in a more furious manner than formerly, wil I deal with thee. The Judgement

was so dreadful, that the Prophet seems either loath, or at least unable to express it; and therefore he doth as it were draw a Vail

over what hee could not in words set forth, with a *Thus will I doe unto thee*; *q. d.* I will bring upon thee some direful desolation, and utter destruction, for so it follows, *Amos 8. 14. They shall fall and never rise again.* Since they be impenitent, I will speedily execute upon them what I formerly threatned (*ver. 2. 3.*) I will give *Samaria* your Metropolis into the *Assyrians* hand, and you shall be carried Captive into a strange Land. There seems to be in the words a kind of

Pathetical Apostrophe, when a man for anger and indignation cannot speak out his words, but cuts off some word, or part of a sentence which is to bee understood; and such kind of speech is very

*Quid sit factururus, facit, ut dum ad singula peccatum genera pendent incerti, penitentiam agant, ne inferat, quae minatur. Hieron.*

*Hac figura perturbatis atque offensis animis accommodata est, Sanctius.*

See more in my Schools-Guard, p. 153.

*Egone illum? quae illum? quae me? quae non? Terent.*



very frequent both in sacred and prophane Writers. Thus, *Pfal. 95. 11. To whom I swear in my wrath, if they enter into my rest, q. d. they shall never enter into my rest; if they come there, let me not be God, or let me not be true.* Thus the Hebrews in their execration Oathes were wont to speak. *Thus* and thus let God doe to me (*1 Sam. 25. 22.*) without expressing the imprecation, as fearing to name those dreadful evils.

*Quos ego (scil. acerime puniam) sed (nunc) motor praestat compo- nere fluitus.*  
*Ving. Aeneid. l. 1*

3 Hee allaieth this sharp Commination with a gentle and sweet *exhortation*, full of clemency and consolation, telling them that he is yet their God in Covenant, ready to receive them, if they will but truly repent, and come in unto him; and therefore he counsels them speedily to prepare (for where no time is exprest, there, as the Debr, say Lawyers, so the Duty, say Divines, is presently to be performed) to meet him, *Isa. 21. 12.* return and come, but when? why presently, that is implied. So here, *prepare to meet thy God*; but when? why presently, before the decree bring forth, and it be too late, *Zeph. 21. 2.* The Lord having told them what he would doe to them, now (such is his goodness) that hee shewes them what they should doe, to prevent his Judgements, *viz.* prepare to meet him. Since he was ready to cast them off, he adviseth them to cast themselves down, and to implore his mercy, and make peace with him.

**Q.** But what is meant by preparing to meet God?

**Ans.** To meet one hath various meanings in Scripture;

1. Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may honour them, thus *Abraham* and *Lot* went to meet the Angels, *Gen. 18. 2. & 19. 1.* 2 Sometimes we goe to meet Persons, that we may scoff and jeer at them, as *Michal* the Daughter of *Saul* did *David*, *2 Sam. 6. 20.* 3 Sometimes we goe to meet Persons to fight with them, as *David* did with *Goliath*, *1 Sam. 17. 48.* And thus some take the words in the Text for an Ironical taunting speech, as if the Lord had said, Since I am coming against thee, prepare your selves to meet me, and see if yee be able to encounter me, and keep me back, who am coming against you as an enemy; come on, and meet mee with your hardned hearts, muster up your Armies, recollect your Forces, call in to your ayde all your Creature-confiden-

*Te parum ad sustinendum impetum ire mea; aut ut occurras mihi vera resipiscencia & emendatione. Drusias.*



ces, and see if they can deliver you from my hand, and save you from my wrath, which is even ready to seize upon you. But this sense is very harsh, and contrary to the scope of the place; for all along the Lord calls upon them, not to stand out against him, but to submit unto him, and therefore he so oft complaines, even five times, *Yet have yee not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Besides, there is no meeting of God with Armes and Armies, or any warlike Forces; what can all the hosts in the world doe against the Lord of Hosts, or who ever hardned himself against him and prospered? *Job 9. 4.* let the Postheards strive with the Postheards of the earth, but woe be to him that striveth with his Maker.

*Preparant in-  
vocos Deum tu-  
um. Septuag.  
Syriac. Arabic.  
Vers.*

4 Sometimes we goe out to meet Persons to humble our selves before them, and to submit to them, as *Shimei* did to *David*, *2 Sam. 19. 16.* and thus it is in the text, *Prepare to meet thy God*, viz. by Prayers and tears, by humble supplication, and real humiliation for sin, by forsaking your Idols, and cleaving to Gods true Worship, and by amendment of your lives run to meet him, that you may prevent the execution of his wrath upon you, &c. This is the most proper meeting of God which is here called for, this is the genuine and true scope of the place; for the words are not a challenge, Come out and meet me; but a precious *direction*, shewing us what we must doe to appease and pacifie God, viz. not meet him in a way of *Opposition* and rebellion, for this were to set Bryers and Thorns in battle against a consuming fire (*Isa. 27. 4.*) but meet him in a way of *submission*, as *Abigail* met *David*, when he was coming to destroy *Nabal* and his house, *1 Sam. 25. 32.* So here, since the Lord hath taken up this determination to punish thee, O *Israel*, and is resolved to bring some greater Judgement on thee, therefore prepare thy self (saith the Prophet) by unfeigned humiliation and repentance, that so thou maist prevent the execution of the sentence. Put on thy mourning weeds, take up a lamentation, make ready thy Petition, goe forth upon thy knee, and beseech him to spare thee, that so thou maist prevent thy utter destruction which is now at hand.

*Cavat peni-  
tentia, ne pra-  
currat senten-  
tia. Chrysologus.*

*Q. But why doth the Lord call upon his people to prepare themselves, when their hearts were hardned, and he tells us that the way of man is not in himself, and that the preparation of the*

the heart is his work, and not ours. (Pfal. 10, 17.) Besides, he had decreed here to carry them into captivity, and hee tells them as much, and therefore all their repentance was but vain.

*Ans. 1.* The Lord had some elect and hidden ones both called, and to be called amongst them, and to these he principally speaks; for all Gods commands are effectual in beleevers: they are not an empty sound, as they are in the ears of unbelievers, but there goes forth a power from God inabling them to obey; if he command them to beleeve, hee inables them so to doe. If he command them to prepare to meet him by repentance, there goes forth a power from him which inables them so to doe. As when our Saviour commanded *Lazarus* to arise, there went forth a power from him that raised him, *Moti movemur, alii agimus*, when the will is regenerate and made pliable, then it readily obeyes all Gods commands, be they never so hard or harsh to flesh and blood; yet they can doe all things Evangelically through Christ that strengthens them. God gives them his preventing, assisting, co-operating, persevering grace, *Job 11. 13, 14.*

2 Such commands as these shew us our duty, not our ability, and must make us in the sense of our own inability, prepare our selves to sue unto him for preparation.

3 Such commands make the wicked more inexcusable, who had power in *Adam* to obey all Gods commands, but they in him have lost it, and by their daily obstinacy, and falling away from God, and his wayes, they have justified that grand Apostasie of our first Parents.

4 The threatnings of God are not alwayes absolute and irrevocable, but for the most part they are conditional, and to be understood with this exception, *viz.* except they repent and amend; and this condition is sometimes expressed, as *Jer. 18. 7, 8. Joel 2. 13, 14.* and sometimes suppressed and concealed, as *Jonah 3. 9. Yet forty dayes and Niniveh shall bee destroyed*; that is, if they repented not. So here, though *Israel's* case seemed desperate, yet the Lord bids them turn, and he would be propitious to them.

5 Admit the Judgement be irrevocable, and Gods people must notwithstanding their repentance, bee Captives to the

See more in  
Mr. Caryl on  
*Job 23. 13. p.*  
*Jer. 436.*

*A Syrius*, yet their repentance had not been fruitless, for they should have escaped eternal misery.

2 In this Life, the punishment of such Penitents is oft mitigated, though not totally removed. Hence we usually see, that in times of publick Calamity it goeth best with the best men; to them these are but fatherly Chastisements, when to the wicked they are fore-runners of greater wrath. A *Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel* may goe into Captivity, but it is for good, as the Lord said sometimes of his People, I will send them into the Land of *Caldea* for good, *Jer.* 24. 5. such mourners shall be marked for Mercy when Judgement comes, *Ezek.* 9. 4.

4 Here are the *Persons*, to whom this Exhortation is applied and directed, and that is, to the ten Tribes, who are often called by the name of *Israel*, as being his off-spring, *King.* 14. 18. & *2 King.* 3. 3. & *10.* 32. hee names them twice, and ingeminates the title, the better to awaken them, and quicken their attention, as also to shew his great affection to them, as *David* named *Absolon* twice, whom he loved. So our Saviour speaking to *Jerusalem*, doubles the title, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem*, *Mat.* 23. 37. to awaken them, to shew his tender love and compassion to them, and to shew his anger against their sins, he Pathetically cries out, *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the Prophets, &c.* q. d. *Thou that hast been the place which God hath honoured with his special presence, and chosen above all the places of the earth for his habitation, so fix his name there, art thou become a den of Devils and Murderers?* So the Lord here, the better to rouze these *Israelites* out of their security and impenitency, by an Epanodos, doubles their name, saying, *Thou wilt I doe to thee, O Israel, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*

5. Since we are backward and averse to this duty of Returning, he backs his Exhortation with a double Motive.

1 The first is a *drawing Motive*, taken from the consideration of Gods readiness to pardon Penitents. Hee is thy God, prepare to meet thy God; hee is thine by Profession, though thou hast walkt unanswerably to it. And 2. He is *Thy God* in Covenant with thee, and so ready to receive thee, if thou wilt but truly turn to him.

The

The second is a *driving Motive*, and is drawn from the consideration of Gods Almighty Power (*vers. 13.*) who was now marching against them. This power (the better to awaken them) he sets forth by six Royalties.

- 1 He formeth the Mounrains.
- 2 Creates the Winds.
- 3 Knows mens Thoughts.
- 4 Maketh the Morning-darkness.
- 5 Treads upon the high places of the Earth.
- 6 He is the Lord of Hosts.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When lesser Judgements will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater.* When Blasting, Mildew, Famine, Pestilence and Sword can doe no good, then look for a *Thus will I doe unto thee*; that is, I will utterly destroy thee, for remedies are in vain, when the sore is so desperate. So *Isa. 1. 5. Why should yee be smitten any more?* q. d. your case is desperate and incurable, and therefore I will trouble my self no more with you, but will now utterly destroy you. And this is that, which highly aggravates *Englands Sin*, we have been long incorrigible under \* lesser Judgements, and therefore what can we now expect, but that the Lord should come with a *Thus* \* See more in my Com. on Hof. 13. 16. *will I doe unto thee, O England, and because I will doe thus unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O England.* Obf. 4. p. 68.

2 Obf. *God will not stick to punish his owne people, and that severely, when they sin against him.* Where he bestowes the greatest Priviledges, there he inflicts the greatest Judgements. He is sharper with them than with Heathens, because they are nearer to him, and so their sins doe more dishonour him. The sins of a *David* doe more dishonour God, than the sins of many uncircumcised Philistims. God will be sanctified of all his nigh ones, (*Levit. 10. 2.*) He dwells amongst his people, and cannot endure their provocations. We can endure dung in our fields, but not in our houses; we can bear with briars and thorns in the Wilderness, which we cannot endure in our inclosed Gardens. Such sin against great light, and great Love, and therefore will bee surely and sharply punished for their iniquity (*Amos 3. 2.*) as wee see in *Eli*, *David*, See more in my Com. on Hof. 13. 15. Obf. 3. 4. p. 48. to 53. *vid,*

vid, Hezekiah, Zachariah, Jerusalem, Esa. 22. 1. Dan. 9. 12.

In my Com.  
on Ho. 13. 16.  
Obf. 2. p. 67.

3 Obf. Ministers must apply the Word unto their people. Thus will I doe to thee O Israel. This is the only way to convince and convert men; what is spoken in general to all, few will apply to themselves. It is this Soul-searching Preaching that is the best teaching. But of this elsewhere.

*Calamitas dici-  
tur ventura ut  
agente populo  
penitentiam  
non veniat.  
Hieron.*

See more in my  
Com. on Hol.  
13. 16. p. 65

4 Obf. God usually warnes before he smites. In mercy here he warnes his people of approaching Judgements, and bids them prepare to meet him. He Lightens before he Thunders, and shoots off his Warning-peeeces, before he shoots off his Murdering-peeeces. He might have come suddenly upon them, and swept them away like dung from the face of the earth for their obstinacy, but see his transcendent clemency and pittie, he warnes them before he destroyes them, and counsels them before he condemns them.

5 Obf. God usually mingles Mercies with his Judgements, and Consolations with his Comminations. Hee tells Israel here of Judgements, but withall he tells them of mercy upon repentance; with the one he drawes us, as with cords of love, and with the other he drives us home to himself. The best have need of both, we have all need to hear of Judgements, to keep us from presumption; and of Mercy, when humbled, to keep us from despair. Hence God so oft joyns both together, as *Levit. 26. Dent. 28.* and the Prophets doe usually allay the terrors of the Law, with the comforts of the Gospel, *Joel 2. 14.*

6 Obf. God ownes his people, even when they are guilty of great sins. He is God, and not like Man, that casts off men for every light offence. Hee tells them here, I am thy God still by profession, though thou hast not walkt up to that privilege. I am thine by Covenant, and thou art mine Israel still; therefore prepare to meet me, and stand no longer out against me.

See more in  
my Com. on  
Hol. 13. 13.  
Obf. 6. p. 23.

7 Obf. When the Lord is coming against a people in Judgement, he then expects that they should presently prepare to meet him by humble supplication, and real repentance.

1 We must meet God with a Petition in our hands; thus Subjects usually address themselves to their Sovereign; especially.

ally when they come under the notion of Offenders, or Malefactors to beg a pardon. We should dispatch these our Ambassadors, *our Prayers and teares*, to meet him in the way, (*Luke 14. 31.*) while he is yet as farre off, that we may prevent the Wrath that is coming upon us. Thus did *Moses*, when he perceived that Gods Wrath was kindled against *Israel*, he fought by humble and fervent Prayer to stop it, *Exod. 32. 11, 12, 13.* so when the Plague was new broke forth, hee commands *Aaron* presently to mediate and intercede for them, and so stayed the Plague, *Numb. 16. 46, 47, 48.* Yea God takes it ill, when in publick calamities there is no intercessor to meet him thus, and mediate for a Nation, *Esa. 59. 16. Ezek. 22. 30.* These Ambassadors in all ages have prevailed wonderfully with God. A Prayer rightly qualified, and circumstantiated for man, matter, manner, what cannot it doe with God?

*Mittamus precibus & lacrymas cordis legatos.*  
Cyprian.

See my Com.  
on Psal. 81. ult.  
P. 182.

*James. 5. 16*

S.

1 It hath an *Universal* power in removing Judgements, or procuring Mercies. The most signal providential changes that ever were made in the world, have been made by the Prayers of Gods people. Prayer is as it were the Midwife to bring great Blessings into the world, and remove great Judgements from us; and therefore when the Lord would destroy a people, he commands his *Jeremies* to forbear praying for them, they must not meet him in this kind to mediate or intercede for them, (*Jer. 7. 16. & 14. 11.*) thereby implying, that he cannot deny the Prayers of his people.

2 These Ambassadors have an *awakening* power. God seems to sleep and take no notice of the miseries of his people many times, but then by their Prayers they must awaken him, *Job 8. 5, 6.* There are two things which doe more especially awaken God, 1. The *Rage of wicked men* (*Psal. 12. 5, & 78. 65, 66.*) and 2. The Prayers of Gods people, *Psa. 82. ult. & 141. 1. Isa. 51. 9.*

3 They have a *binding and a loosening* power. *Moses* by his Prayers binds Gods hands that hee cannot strike, till he aske leave as it were of *Moses*, and bid him let goe that hee may smite them, *Exod. 32. 10. Numb. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20.* And Prayer hath a loosening power, sin ties

*Considera hic quid precibus sanctorum tribuatur, quomodo illis Deus teneatur & ligetur. Quis te ligavit Domine? ligatum habent sancti Deum, ut non puniat nisi permiserint ipsi. Bern.*



Gods hands, that they cannot help, but Prayer unties them, *Judg.* 10. 10. to 17.

4 They have a *commanding power*, such is Gods great condescension, that though he be the Commander of all, yet hee suffers himself to be commanded by the Prayers of his people, *Isa.* 45. 11. Gods people have often experienced the power of Prayer, and therefore in all their distresses they fly to their Prayers, and have ventured their lives, resolving rather to loose them, than their praying opportunities, *Dan.* 6. 10. yea and this hath made them so earnestly beg the Prayers of Gods people, *Romans* 15. 30. they will not part with their interest in them for a Kingdome. Yea, such is the power of the Prayers of the godly, that even wicked men, when they are in distress, have begged for them. Thus *Pharaoh* beseeches *Moses* to pray for him, and *Saul* calls for the Prayers of a *Samuel*. The time would fayl me, to tell of the great exploits, which the Prayer of faith hath done; no Conqueror can shew such famous Trophies and Triumphs as it can doe. Prayer actuated, and invivened by faith, hath subdued Kingdoms, stopped the mouthes of Lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the Sword, &c. *Heb.* 11. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36. and hath done the Churches enemies more mischief, than all the Armies in the world (*Psal.* 56. 9.) how \* lightly soever wicked men esteeme of them. This is

\* *Nihil reliatum est Britannicum domare Casarem, Ni νεομαρτομεύς preces Gregis. V.*  
*May his History of the Parliament of England, l. 3. c. 5. p. 90, 91. folio.*

*Gods Ordinance*, and hee ever loves to be found in his own way.

2. The Prayers of Gods people suit best with Gods interest and ends; they seek the advancement of Gods glory, the good of his Church, the increase of his graces in their souls; all which are very taking with God.

3. Their Prayers must needs be powerful, if you consider the

See the prevalency of Prayer, in Mr. *Neh. Rogers* his friend at midnight, Mr. *Love* on Luke 11. 8. and Mr. *Fenner* on Luke 11. 9. p. 163. folio. Mr. *Will. Sedgwick* his Fast Ser. on *Isa.* 62. 7. p. 28. & 43. preach't 1642. D. *Harris* his Fast Ser. on Luke 10. 6. p. 43. &c. p. 3. preach't 1642.

*Persons praying*, they are Gods Sons and Daughters, his peculiar people, the Spouse of Christ. Now Relations can doe much; and if we, who are evil, will give good things to our Children, when they

cry to us, much more will God supply the wants of his, when they call upon him, *Marth.* 7. 11. 4. They are put up



up in Christs name, and indited by his Spirit, and God cannot deny Christ that makes intercession for us, and his Spirit, that makes intercession in us, with sighs and groans.

2 We must meet the Lord *humbly* and *submissively*. As *Benhadads* servants met the King of *Israel*, with ropes about their necks, because that they had heard, that the Kings of *Israel* were merciful Kings. So let us put ropes about our necks, as signs of our acknowledgement, that we are worthy of death; and the rather, because the God of Heaven is a merciful God, (1 *King*. 20. 31.) Rising and raging at Gods Chastisements like a wilde Bull in a net, when men are full of the fury of the Lord ( *Esay* 51. 20. ) this is the way to provoke God, to goe on in wrath against us, and to double his strokes upon us, *Levit*. 26. 24. If a Potent Prince should raise a great Army against us, and we had no strength to oppose his strength, the only way is to meet him with humble, submissive Supplications, and so make peace with him. So, when ever we find, that the great God is angry with us for our sins, let us lay down the weapons of our rebellion; submit unto him; judge our selves, and then he will not judge us; accuse our selves, and he will acquit us; be sharp, and severe with our selves, and he will be merciful to us; let us accept of the punishment of our iniquity, and justifie him, in all that he hath done unto us, and then we have his promise for pardon, *Levit*. 26. 40, 41, 42. wee know, it is not for Gods honour to trample upon worms. The Lion will not seize on a yeelding Prey, the Mastiff will not fall on the little Dogge, that lyes on its back, turns up all four, and cries quarter. The bending Reed is preserved, when the stubborn Oke is pluckt up by the roots. It is the proud and haughty, whom God resists; he sets himself in Battle array against them, and delights to manifest his power in their subversion, *Esay* 2. 12. to 18. But the humble are his habitation and delight. Let us therefore meet him submissively, considering wee are not a match for him. Sinful Nations are too weak for God, how much more are single Persons, *Esay* 40. 15. 1 *Cor*. 10. 22. It is God, that overturns Kings and Kingdoms at his pleasure, hee hath overthrown Kingdoms that stood like firme Rocks. Of all things herebelow, we count Metals the strongest, as Gold, Silver, Brasse, Iron, of which *Nebuchadnezzars* Image was composed,

sed, (*Dan. 2. 32, 33.*) whereby is meant the *Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman* Monarchies, the four greatest Monarchs of the World, yet three of these the Lord hath already dash't in peeces, and the Iron one of *Rome* only remains, which God will shortly lay in the dust.

3 We must meet God *with grace in our hearts*. If wee goe to meet God, our business is to make our peace with God, which we cannot doe without grace, for to the wicked there is no peace. Now grace though it hath many other, yet it is chiefly woven up, and composed of these two golden threads,

1. *Love to God.* 2. *Hatred of sin.*

V. Mr. Case  
his Morning  
Lect. in quarto  
p. 54, 55.

1 *Love to God*. We must love him *appretiative & intensive*, with highest intention of affection. Love is our best affection, and therefore most fit for God who is our best friend.

2 *Hatred of Sin*. There are two Affections especially which set themselves against sin, which are, Hatred and Grief. Hatred respects the nature of sin, and Grief respects the nearness of sin. If we had no sin we should hate it, but if it were not near us, we should not grieve for it. There are many, that hate sin but never grieve for it, but we must meet God with both these affections in us; wee must hate sin as to its owne nature, and grieve for it as it is our owne sin, and as we offend God thereby; and this is to meet God with grace in our hearts.

4 We must meet God *with Christ in our armes*. There is no seeing his face, unless we bring this our elder brother with us. God is holy, and we are unholy, so that he will not treat with us without Christ, nor can wee think of God out of Christ, but with extream horreur; besides, God will have satisfaction for sin past, before he treat for the time to come; now Christ is our Atonement, and our Mediator, and wee can expect no good from God without him, therefore let us meet him with Christ in our armes.

5 We must meet God with true *Repentance*. Sorrow befits a Sinner, as a garment doth the body. The garment of Repentance was made for sinners. Had we never sinned, we had never sorrowed. Repentance is Gods delight, it is his favourite, which he comes down from Heaven to salute and embrace, *Esay 57. 15. Luke 15. 20.* Sin armes God against us, but repentance disarms him; he cannot with-hold Mercies from

from the penitent, his promiſe hath given repentance power to prevail with him, it is the way of his owne preſcribing, when he would have his people to find mercy in his eyes, hee bids them take this courſe, *Iſa.* 1. 16, 17. & 55. 7. *Cant.* 6. 13. *Jer.* 4. 14. & 13. ult. *Ezek.* 18. 31, 32. *Joa.* 2. 12, 13. *Zeph.* 2. 1, 2, 3. *Acts* 17. 30. *Jam.* 4. 8, 9, 10. This is a never failing remedy, it alwaies obtaines either the bleſſing fought for, or ſome better thing; as we ſee in *Manaſſes*, the *Ninivites*, *Mary Magdalen*, the *Prodigal*, *Paul*, the *Iſraelites*, *Judg.* 10. 15, 16.

Yea, the very ſhadow of repentance can doe ſomething for the removal of a temporal Judgement; as we ſee in *Ahabs* hypocritical humiliation, and *Rehoboams*, 2 *Chron.* 12. 6, 7. The *Iſraelites* that cried unto the Lord only in their trouble, yet were delivered out of their diſtreſs; and if the ſhadow can doe ſo much, what will not the ſubſtance doe? Repentance qualifies the ſoul, and fits it for Mercies Temporal, and Spiritual. It makes the heart ſoft, tender, flexible, and ready to receive any impreſſion from God, *Acts* 9. 6. This is that *Panacea*, that *Catholicon*, that Universal remedy againſt all maladies, 2 *Chron.* 7. 14. *Jer.* 18. 7, 8. Theſe tears and waters of repentance are very medicinal, and can prevail with God, when no others can, to extinguiſh the fire of his wrath, which is now gone forth againſt us. *England* is now upon her *Sick-bed*, and we have great cauſe to fear, that ſhee is upon her *Death-bed*, and will ſcarcely recover; wee ſhall ſhortly ſee whether ſhe will live or dye, her critical hour is now at hand, and we may juſtly ſuſpect her death; and that becauſe God hath caſt his dealings with us into ſo many moulds and forms, and tried us every way, and yet we do not prepare to meet him. God hath been pleading with *England*, this hundred years by his *Word*, for his Worſhip, for his Day, for his Diſcipline, and for the power of godlineſs, and yet we have not prepared to meet him.

God hath of late years been pleading with *Fire and Sword*, and though theſe bloody Arguments have ſpread abroad, and there is ſcarcely a Town where blood hath not been ſhed; yet have we not prepared to meet the Lord. The Rod hath a voyce, but we have not heard it, *Micah* 6. 9. It is a ſad Symptom of deſtruction, when we ſhall ſee the Rod, but not hear

hear it; it is a sign that we are either deaf, or dead. God hath spoken to us with anger in his countenance, and thunder in his voyce, will yee still prophane my Holy things? persist in your formaliry? and goe on in your rebellion against me? and yet we turn the deaf care to him, hating to be reformed. And now when we thought all Gods Judgements were buried, and the memory of them was almost obliterated, yet they seeme to revive, and to be raised out of their Graves again. We are now dying and know it not, gray hairs are here and there upon us, and we take no notice of it (*Hos. 7. 9.*) God cries to us by his Judgements, *To day if yee will hear his voyces, harden not your hearts*; while it is called to day make your peace with mee, before the night of warre, dearth, and death surprize you. God hath set forth a *Third Edition* of Warre, he hath printed his Wrath in Capital letters, his Spurs stick deep in our sides, and our lashes are heard over all parts of Christendome; and yet how little are we affected therewith, and how careless are we to prepare to meet the Lord. With what a horrid stupidity are wee benumbed? the Plague of *Lots Wife* hath fallen upon us, and we are turned into Stones and Pillars; so that as our Saviour wept over *Jerusalem*, so should we weep over *England* for its induration, and not knowing the day of her Visitation. There is a dark and dismal cloud of wrath hangs over our heads; there is but one way left to prevent its falling on us, and that is, 1. *Personal Repentance*, every one to amend one. 2. *Domestical Repentance*, every Family apart must humble themselves for their family sins, *Zach. 12. 12.* 3. *National Repentance*, when the Magistrate shall command the whole Nation to humble themselves, for the crying sins, and great provocations, which have been daily committed in the midst of us. Till this be done, I shall never expect that truth or peace should abide long amongst us. Let us then every one fall heartily to this work, which must of necessity be done, or else we are undone, *Luke 13. 3. Job. 3. 5.* let us humble our selves, and then God will raise us up, *Job 22. 29. Jam. 4. 10.* Let us weep now, and we shall have joy when troubles come, *Job 5. 22. Hab. 3. 16.* Our sins are the *Achans* which have troubled our *Israel*; our sins are the *Jonahs* which have raised these storms and tempests amongst us; our sins are the

the *Sheba's* that have raised rebellion in the Land, it is our malignant sins, which have raised up against us malignant enemies; let us then stone these *Achans*, and our troubles will cease; drown these *Fonabs*, and our storms will over; cut off the heads of these *Sheba's*, and our troubles will end; let us destroy our malignant sins, and God will soon destroy our malignant enemies. If men would but judge themselves, they should not be judged of God, 1 *Cor.* 11. 31. Let us then set upon this Soul-enriching-work of *Self-examination, and Self-judging*. Let us arraign our selves, and set our selves as in Gods presence, before his bar. Let us examine, and take a view of our selves, in the Glass of Gods Law, and when wee have found out our corruptions, let us with shame and sorrow confess them, and spread them before the Lord, to move him to shew pity to us. Let us judge our selves worthy to be destroyed for them, humbly imploring pardon, in the name and mediation of Jesus Christ. Doe but this soundly, and sincerely, and it will qualifie thee, for mercies Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal; and give thee title and interest in many gracious Promises; as *Levit.* 26. 40, 41, 42. *Prov.* 28. 13. 1 *Joh.* 1. 9. The Lord is now upon his march against us, it is time therefore for us to meet him with our Prayers, and mollifie him with our Tears, considering our own inability to grapple with him; Can dust and ashes contend with the God of Heaven and Earth? Can we with ten thousand Lusts, meet the Lord with twenty thousand of Angels? Can impotency vie with Omnipotency? O no.

See this Point excellently enlarged, by Mr. *Ant. Burgess*, in his Treatise of Self-judging

2 Consider, we cannot run from God (*Psal.* 139. 7. *A-mos* 9. 2, 3.) we can goe no where from God, but we must fall into his hands. Let us therefore run from him, to him, *Ab irato ad placatum*, from him as an angry God, to him as a reconciled Father. Bloud-letting is the cure of bleeding, and to close with an enemy is the way to avoyd the blow.

3 Consider, *If we goe not to meet God, he will fetch us*. He will either fill our souls with terrours, or else send outward afflictions to arrest us. When *Joab* would not come to *Ab-solon*, he commands his field of Corn to bee fired, and then *Joab* arose and came, 2 *Sam.* 14. 30, 31. Physicians sometimes to cure the Lethargy, doe cast into a Feaver; so doth God, oft cure us of one evil by another. If the Word cannot,

the Sword shall fetch us in, or else doe that which is worse, send us to Hell. Let us then learn to prevent blows; hearken to counsel and you may be safe, else rods are prepared for the backs of fools, *Prov. 26. 3.* If we come not in of our selves, let us expect some sad Messenger to fetch us; therefore while the sea is calm, and the weather fair, let us set out to meet our God. What the Lord said of *Hezekiah*, is too true of *England*, that he rendred not according to what he had received; so we are much behind hand with God, we receive much, but we return little; the Christian World is turned Bankrupt, and God is now issuing forth Process to seize upon Body, Goods, and Life. Hee cannot have what he would have, he will therefore have what he should have. He is now setting us as low, as we have hitherto set his love. Long-suffering is now at an end; God will have all paid now, or else Justice will set abroad our blood. O *England*, then repent, and prepare to meet thy God; and to encourage us, know, that if wee will goe to meet God, he will come to meet us; he will meet our sorrow with his sense of it; our Prayers with his presence, and propitious answers; and our tears with his handkerchief. Nay, he will meet us with embraces, as the father of the Prodigal did his returning Son, *Luke 15. 20.* Let us then goe to him, with humble acknowledgements in our mouthes, and say to him, Father, we have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, we have abused thy Mercies, despised thy Judgements, despised thy Spirit, and have not returned unto thee. Let us thus in humility fall down at Gods feet, and he will fall on our necks, and embrace us in the armes of his love. Seeing therefore God will doe thus unto us, let us prepare our selves to meet our God.

[ See more concerning the necessity, and excellency of Repentance, in Master *Perkins*, Mr. *Dyke*, and Doct. *Tho. Taylor*, their particular Treatises of Repentance, Mr. *Hookers* Soules-preparation for Christ, Mr. *Bridge* on *Matth. 4. 2.* D. *Irestons* Judas Repentance, and *Pauls* conversion, Mr. *Fenners* Danger of deferring Repent. Many Treatises of Mr. *Baxter* about Conversion, Mr. *Swinmocks* Key to Regeneration, on *John 3. 3.* *Binchins* his Mellific. Theolog. Loc. 19. P. 4. p. 90. & Doct. *Holdsworth* on *Hos. 14. 2.* *Dyke* on Conscience, p. 49. and on the Sacrament, p. 37. *Tassin* on



on Amendment, p. 422. Mr. Baines Ser. Rev. 2.4. p. 17. Doct. Loves Ser. on Isa. 21. 12. Doct. Burges his Fast Ser. on Jer. 4. 14. Harsenet on Repentance, Mr. Case his Morning Lectures in quarto, p. 485. &c. Reyner his Precepts for Practice, p. 4, 5.]

## VERSE 13.

*For loe, he that formeth the Mountains; and createth the Winds, and declareth unto man what is his thought; that maketh the morning darkness, and treadeth upon the high places of the earth; the Lord, the God of Hosts is his name.*

**I**N the precedent Verse the Lord seeks to draw his People to himself by Mercies, he mindes them of his Covenant, and tells them they were his *Israel* still, and therefore they ought not to stand it out against him, but speedily submit themselves, and meet their God with intreaties of peace, who was still ready to receive them. But least this should not work upon such indurate Sinners, the Prophet comes in this Verse to proclaim Gods Majesty, Omnipotence, Omniscience, &c. The better to affect and awaken these drowfie ones, and to make them fear; We have here a multiplicity and heap of excellent Titles given to God; for the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men, but when the Transcendent Excellencies of God, shall in variety of words, bee set forth to the life unto us, this strikes an awe and reverence in our hearts. In the words we have,

1 An elegant description of the glorious Majesty of God, set forth in state and solemnity, by Six Royalties.

2 Here is the note of Attention, *Loe*, or behold, *q. d.* doe not lightly pass over this, but deeply ponder, and diligently consider, the Power, and Majesty of this great God, with whom thou hast to doe.

3 Here is the reason of this glorious description of God, included in the Particle *For*, *for hee that formeth the Mountains, and creates the Winds, &c.* It is he that is marching in fury against thee, who is a consuming Fire, whose Power



and Majesty thou art not able to resist; and therefore beware of provoking him to wrath against thee, by thy impenitency, for *Quot tituli, tot ora*; all these Titles, and Elogies, are as so many mouths to call upon us, to fear the Lord, and to turn unto him. As first, It is he that formed the mighty and the massie Mountains; therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 2. It is he that by his Almighty power creates the fierce and terrible Winds, therefore fear him, and turn unto him. 3. It is he that searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, therefore dissemble not with him, but truly and totally turn unto him. 4. He can turn the light into darkness, and thy joy into sorrow, therefore fear to offend him, and prepare to meet him. 5. He is the most High, having the Heaven for his Throne, and the Earth for his foot-stool; therefore beware of provoking him, and return unto him. 6. He is the Lord of Hosts, and can arme all the Powers in Heaven, and Earth, and Hell against thee, therefore resist him not, but speedily prepare to meet him, with intreaties of peace, before his wrath surprize thee, and it be too late.

This Verse is a Mine full of rich Treasures, I shall therefore dig for them.

1. *He formeth the Mountains.* They were not cast up by *Noahs* Flood (as some weakly have imagined) but are here expressly said to be formed, and framed by the most wise God, for the benefit and ornament of the Universe. God made them out of the rude Mass, and confused Chaos of earth, when he gathered the Waters into one place, and the dry land appeared, *Gen. 1. 9.* and it is apparent, that the Mountains were in being before *Noahs* Flood, for it is said, that *all the high Mountains were covered with waters* (*Gen. 7. 19.*) they were then in being, before they are said to be fixed, and settled by God (*Prov. 8. 25.*) and framed in weight and measure by him, *Isa. 40. 12.* He hath made the Mountains strong and stable, high and unmoveable, for his own glory, (*Psal. 148. 5, 9.*) and the good of Mankind. (*Psal. 65. 5.*) By the Mountains the violence of the Winds are broken, and kept from hurting us, and so they are for *Muniment*. By them the Universe is adorned, and made more glorious and wonderful, and so they are for *Ornament*. By them the Vallies are kept warm, and enriched, by them they are watered with

*Adhuc non timetis Deum, qui etiam diem quo cavere non potestis, auferre vobis potest? Luther.*

with Springs, and ſhowers that run down from them (*Job* 24. 8. *Pſal.* 104. 10.) To them men run for ſhelter and defence in times of trouble, *Pſal.* 11. 1. *Job.* 2. 16. *Matth.* 24. 16. *Heb.* 11. 38. By them Cities are defended under God, againſt their enemies, *Pſal.* 125. 2. upon them growes Graſs for the ſheep, and beaſts of the field, and here they feed, *Job* 39. 8. *Pſal.* 50. 11. & 148. 9. *Iſa.* 18. 6. Here many Treasures of Mettals and Minerals, of Lead, Iron, Braſs, Stone, Silver, Gold, &c. are hid, *Deut.* 8. 9.

This ſhould make us, 1. Love the Lord, who hath ſo curiouſly formed, and framed the Univerſe for the good of man.

2 It ſhould make us fear to offend him, who by his Almighty Power hath created theſe mighty, maſſive Mountains, and before whom they tremble, and melt like Wax. Theſe obey God, and praiſe him in their kind (*Iſa.* 44. 23.) and if the Lord of theſe Mountains be againſt us, no Mountaine can fence or ſhelter us, *Jer.* 3. 23. *Ezek.* 38. 20. A due apprehenſion of Gods Majeſty, will make us perform all our Duties with fear and reverence, *Pſal.* 2. 11. *Heb.* 12. 29. We ſhould take ſhame to our ſelves, for our hardneſs of heart, and great inſenſibility, when we conſider, how the Mountains, and inanimate Creatures tremble at his preſence; how much more when he is angry; and if theſe be overthrown by God in his anger, *Job.* 9. 5. & 28. 9. much more ſhall wicked men, thoſe metaphorical Mountains, which exalt themſelves againſt God, and his wayes, bee overturned by him, *Iſa.* 64. 1. *Zach.* 4. 7.

2 Hee createth the Wind. This is the ſecond Prerogative Royal of the great God. By creating the Mountains and the Wind, two mighty things (under which Synecdochically are comprehended the other Works of God) the Prophet ſets forth Gods Omnipotency, for it would have been too much to have enumerated all the reſt of Gods glorious VVorks, and therefore he pitcheth on ſome chief ones, and leaves us to conclude of the reſt. Before he had ſpoken of the creating of the Mountains, now he comes to ſpeak of the VVinds, which ariſe (as ſome conceive) out of thoſe Mountains. Theſe two differ in nature, for the one is groſs and unmoveable, but the VVinds are of an airie, thin ſubſtance, which cannot be ſeen; and

*Ruach, Ven-  
tus, Spiritus,  
flatus.*

and yet such is their power that they toss the Seas, overthrow the strongest Trees, cast down Houses; yea and overturne Mountains, when these VVinds are shut up in their bowels. The word *Ruach* is *Homonymous*, and hath various significations, which hath bred various Lectiōns, and various interpretations.

*Ab ordine ver-  
borum nulla est  
argumentatio.*

\* See Caryl on  
Job 28. 25.

1 Some read it thus, he createth the Soul or *Spirit*. Calvin conceives that the Prophet speaks of the spirit of man, though he excludes not the VVind, and his reason is because of that which follows, *viz. The shewing to man his thoughts*. But if this way of reasoning were valid, we may better say (*Salva semper Reverentia tanto viro dignissima*) that he speaks of the Natural VVinds, because immediately before he spake of the Mountains, from whence Philosophers conceive that these VVinds proceed, and the word *Ruach* is oft put for the Natural VVinds; as *Exod. 10. 13, 19. & 15. 10.* \* *Job* 28. 25.

\* See D. Chy-  
nol on the Tri-  
nity, chap. 4.  
p. 31. D. Owen  
against Bidle, Chap. 15. p. 351. D. Arnold Religio Socin. p. 137. &c. D. Cloppenburg  
and Estwick against Bidle, and above all (as having much in a little room) The  
Blasphemmer slaine with the sword of the Spirit,

2 The Socinians and their followers take this word for a *Spirit*, and that Spirit to be the Holy Ghost; this they doe to destroy the Deity of the Holy Ghost. See here what windy, idle, addle conceits Hereticks have, and what feeble, sandy foundations they build upon; they catch at any chrotchet which may please their humours: For it is plaine here that the Prophet speaks of the created VVind, or if they will needs read it Spirit, yet it is a created Spirit, *Hee createth Ruach the Wind, or the Spirit*. But the Holy Ghost is not made or Created, but proceedeth from the Father, and the Son, and is *God blessed for ever*; as is \* abundantly proved by others.

As for the Natural causes of the VVind, Philosophers differ; Some conceive that the Sun drawing up Vapours and Exhalations, and they falling down again by violence, become Winds by the coldness of the middle region.

3 Others conceive, that the aire being pent up in the Vaults and Caves of the earth, having a vent doe break forth,  
and

and so spread into Winds, and for this they bring *Psal. 135. 7.*

*Jer. 10. 13. & 51. 16. Hee causeth the Vapours to ascend from*

*the ends of the earth, he maketh Lightning for the rain, and*

*bringeth the wind out of his treasures ; That is, say they, out of*

*his Vaults and Concavities, wherein it is kept as in a Treasury.*

But God himself, who hath made the Wind, tells us plainly,

that we know not whence it comes, nor whither it goes,

*Joh. 3. 7. we may therefore well be ignorant of that, which*

*God in his wisdom hath hidden from us. An humble igno-*

*rance in deep Mysteries, whether Natural, or Supernatural ;*

*whether in the works, or the Word of God, is better and safer*

*than proud curiosity.*

VVe have many Reasons to bless God for the *Wind*. It is

indeed a common Blessing, but yet we could not live with-

out it.

1 If the Aire be thick, dark, and unwholsome, the VWind

cleareth and *purgeth the aire* for the health of our Bodies, and

for the preservation of the Creatures. They dispel noysome Va-

pours, and therefore are called *Scopa mundi*, the worlds Bee-

oms, with which God sweeps his great House, the world.

2 If we want *Rain*, the Winds carry the Clouds, and bring

us rain ; at the Prayers of *Elisab*, after three years drought,

the Heavens were darkned with Clouds and Wind, whence

came a great rain, *1 King. 18. 45.*

3 They *cool the Aire* in the heat of Summer, and help to

refresh us.

4 They help our *Ships to sayl*, and bring Commodities

from all Nations to us ; and help our Mills to grind our

Corn.

5 They serve for the *Miraculous help* of Gods Church and

People. When the Lord had brought *Israel* by a strong hand

out of *Egypt*, hee caused the Sea to goe back by a strong

East-wind, and made the Sea dry land for his people to pass

thorough, *Exod. 14. 21.*

6 They help to *execute Gods Judgements* on the wicked.

VVith an East-wind the Lord brought Locusts, and Gras-

hoppers on *Egypt* to devour their fruit ( *Exod. 10. 13,*

*19* ) and by a VWest-wind hee drove them away again.

*Theodosius* praying against his enemies, the winds brought

R

back

*Especubus & locis abditis, in quibus velut in Theauris continet ven-*  
*tor. V. Polan.*  
*Syntag. l. 1. c. 17.*  
*Robinsons Types of Christ. p. 92.*  
*and especially Mr. Caryl on Job 28. 25.*

back the enemies Arrows on their owne heads, which made *Claudian* cry,

*Onimum dilecte Deo, cui militat aether,  
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti!*

Ascribe not then great VVinds to Conjurers, Witches, Devils, &c. The Winds are Gods servants, and doe readily obey his commands (*Psal.* 148. 8. *Math.* 8. 26.) and not the Devils. Satan without Gods leave cannot raise so much wind as will toss a feather. He could doe nothing in this kind against *Job*, till he had a Commission from God, *Job* 1. 16, 19.

3 This is not all, for the Prophet descends to man, and tells us, that since God made him, he also can tell him his thoughts, meditations, and purposes. He can tell what Language men have in their hearts, and what they talk within themselves, as the rich fool did, *Luke* 12. 17. Our words are not so intelligible to men, as our thoughts are to God. Christ knew what was in man, hee knew their thoughts (*Job*. 2. ult.) and therefore he answered his enemies many times, not according to their words, but according to their thoughts, *Math.* 8. 20. yea God knows our thoughts before we think them, and our conceits before we conceive them, hee understands them as farre off, *Psal* 139. 2. he being *intimo nostro intimior*, nearer to us than our flesh is to our bones; hee knowes our thoughts in *Posse* from all eternity; so great is his Omniscience! As a man that knoweth what Roots he hath in his Garden, though there be no flower appearing, yet he can say, when the Spring comes, this and this will come up. So it is here, God knowes our frames, our Principles, our Projects, and what the issue will be, nothing is hid from his All-seeing eye. The words are diversly read.

1 Some refer the *Affix* to God, thus, Hee declareth to man his owne mind and meditation, and tells him what hee intends to doe (*Esay* 41. 26. *Amos* 3. 7.) thus he revealed his mind to *Abraham* before hee would destroy *Sodome*, and Christ reveals his secrets to his Disciples, *John* 15. 15.

2 The Septuagint mistaking the Original, read it thus,  
He

He declareth unto man his Christ, *Mefhicho, Christum, vel Unicum suum*; but the word is \* *Mefecho*, what is his thought. But the proper scope of the Text, is to convince the *Israelites*, that they had not to doe with men, but with the Omnipotent God, who searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins, and knoweth the hidden things of man, even the most secret turnings and windings, ploddings and purposes of the Soul, so as he cannot be deceived, neither will he be mocked. A man may know much by himself, but God knowes more; our Consciences may accuse us of some things, but God is greater than our Consciences, and knoweth all things.

\* *Quid sit cogitatio vel meditatio sua, vel eloquium suum, nam Suach est secum cogitare, vel secum colloqui. Sanctius.*

*Q. But how doth God declare unto man his Thoughts?*

*Ans.* Divers wayes. 1. Sometimes he discovers and dis-appoints the most secret aymes, and intentions of men, and so makes their thoughts visible to the world.

2 By his Ministers, they opening the Word of God, which is a Soul-searching Word, doe discover to men the thoughts, and intents of their hearts, *Heb. 4. 12.*

3 Sometimes without the Word, God by his Spirit checks men, and convinceth the Conscience of the vanity, and sinful imaginations which are in them.

*He maketh the morning darkness.*

The Prophet goes on still to shew the Almighty Power of God, who can turn the brightest morning into dreadful darkness, and the most glorious day into a dismal night. If he be angry: he can make the morning not only dark, but darkness it self in the Abstract; that is, exceeding dark.

How the Abstract doth augment the signification, see my Schools Guard. Rule 36.

2 Others read the words thus, *He maketh the morning and the darkness*; that is, he maketh both Day and Night. God shews his Power, not only in creating the World, but also in governing the whole course of Nature continually, exactly ordering the Vicissitude and change of Day and Night. It is he that makes the Light and the Darkness, in the morning he makes the Light to arise out of darkness; and in the evening he makes the darkness to follow the Light. This sense is good. But the first I look upon as most genuine from the text.

*Hee treadeth upon the high places of the earth.* This is true, both in a Literal, and in a Metaphorical sense.



1 Take the words *Literally* for the highest Hills, and the lofty things of the World, even these are subject unto God, and lye at his feet; he treads upon all worldly glory and excellency. As Heaven is his Throne, so the Earth, even the highest places of the earth are his foot-stool. Hee treads upon

*Omnia subiicit quantumvis munita & excelsa, & propter altitudinem inaccessa. Levelius.*

high Mountains, high Buildings, high Fortifications and walled Cities, all which are comprehended

under the name of *High places* (Deut. 32. 13.) these hee turns upside down, when ever pleaseth him. This is the most proper sense. But take it *Metaphorically*, either for the high places of the earth, where \* Altars were erected to Idols (as Numb. 33. 52. 2 Chron. 11. 15. & 33. 3. Jer. 32. 35. Ezek. 16. 16.) even these will God tread upon and destroy, Levit. 26. 30.

\* Bznab. excelsa, ita dicuntur vel a celsitudine montium in quibus are ad sacrificandum consisterentur; vel ab ipsis aris quae alta sunt.

V. Ravaneh in V. excelsus.

2 If you take it for the high and lofty of the earth, even these Gods hand doth reach, yea and his feet tread upon. Hee makes the proud of the earth his foot-stool, Psal. 110. 1. though they be high, yet he will make them know, that there is an higher than they, Eccles. 5. 8. though they bee mighty, yet they shall know, that there is one who is *Almighty*, who pulls down the mighty from their seats, and is terrible even to the Kings of the earth, Psal. 76. 12. Esay 2. 10. Luke 1. 32. Now though the literal sense bee here principally intended, yet the Mystical and Meraphorical sense would not be excluded.

Q. But who is it that doth these great and glorious things?

A. The Prophet tells you, it is *Jehovah the God of Hosts*, that is his name, a name full of Power, Majesty, and Excellency, and therefore to be revered of all his people.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

Rev. 1. 8. 1 God is Omnipotent. Creation is a work of Omnipotency, but that is here ascribed to God; it is he that formeth the Mountains, and createth the Winds, and turns Light into darkness, and hath all Creatures at his command, and therefore



fore he must needs be Almighty. Man can make something out of something: but to create the Universe out of nothing, and that by the word of his mouth; this speaks his wonderful Omnipotency, *Psal. 33. 6, 9.* He is able to doe whatsoever he will, *Psal. 135. 3.* yea his Power is beyond his Will, for of stones he could raise up Children unto *Abraham*, but hee will not, *Math. 3. 9.* There is nothing too hard for him, no difficulties can hinder him in his working, *Job 4. 9. Math. 19. 26. Luke 1. 37.* Those impossibilities in nature which are the reproach of Physicians, yet are they Gods Cure. The power that is in the Creature is but derivative, and by participation; but all Power is in God perfectly, eminently, infinitely, and originally.

Fear then to offend him; chuse rather to displease all the world than to displease him: (*Jer. 5. 21, 32.*) they can but kill the body, but he can kill both body and soul, *Mat. 10. 28.* A Tenant, especially if he be a Tenant at will, is afraid of displeasing his Landlord, who can when ever he pleaseth cast him out of all. The men of *Tyre* and *Sidon* made peace with *Herod*, because their Land was nourished by the Kings Land, and he might doe them a displeasure, *Acts 12. 20.* Beleeve and fear his Power now, else you are like ere long to feel it, for though he be slow to anger, yet is he great in power, and will by no means acquit the wicked, *Nahum. 1. 3.*

See Mr. Cope  
his Morning  
Lect. in quarto  
p. 58.

2 Serve him with fear, and doe all that wee doe to him with the greatest reverence. So did *Job*, ch. 40. 4. & 42. 5. & *Esay 6. 5.* let us readily doe his commands. If he doe but call to any of the Creatures, they stand up together, as ready to execute whatever their great Lord and Master commands them, *Esay 48. 13.* yea so pliant are they to doe his will, that they contradict their owne natures to serve him. Fire descends from Heaven at his command, and the fluent Waters stand as a wall to defend his people, and destroy their enemies; which may shame us out of our rebellion, and disloyalty, when we see how the inferiour Creatures serve him with one consent.

2 It likewise serves for singular comfort, and that many wayes.

1 It may be thou hast great enemies coming against thee, yet remember still, that there is a greater than they. Suppose

Nations, all Nations should come against thee: yet compared to God, they are but *as the drop of a bucket, nothing, less than nothing*, *Esay 40. 12, &c, & 51. 12, 13. Rom. 8. 30.* There are more with us than are with them; with them is but an arme of flesh, but with us is the Almighty, not as a bare Spectator, but as an Assister, and fighter for us, *2 Chron. 32. 7, 8.*

2 It may be thou art troubled with strong corruptions, why goe unto this strong God, there is nothing too hard for him. Though thy sins have been habitual, customary, con-natural sins, yet he is the God of Nature, and can change Nature. Though we cannot make a Black-more white, yet hee can, *Jer. 13. 23*, though thy sins have been of a Crimson dye, yet he is able to make them white as Snow, *Esay 1. 18.*

3 Art thou troubled with great *tentations*, and sad afflictions, yet remember God is Almighty, and can make Medicines of these Poisons; and will in the conclusion turn all to thy good, *Rom. 8. 28.* and therefore be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, *Ephes. 6. 10.*

See Mr. Gouge  
wel, and Doct.  
Gouge on Eph.  
6. 10.

4 It may comfort us against *Apostasie*. Thou fearest, that thou shalt never be able to hold out; walk humbly with thy God, and then thou needst not fear what Man, or Devil can doe unto thee; for stronger is he that is in us, than he that is in the world, *1 Joh. 4. 4.* Did we stand by our own strength we were undone, for in his owne strength shall no man bee strong; but we are kept by the mighty Power of God, through faith unto salvation, *1 Pet. 1. 5.* Though we be weak, yet our Redeemer is strong, *Jer. 50. 33, 34.* and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against us. Let the world rage, the Devil roar, and corruption fret, yet God is greater than all, and none shall be able to pull them out of his hand, *Joh. 10. 28, 29.* He that hath called us hath promised to keep us, he is both able, and willing to doe it, *Esay 42. 5, 6.*

In te spes &  
non spes. Aug.

5 It may comfort us against the fear of death; what though thy Body lye rotting in the Grave, and Worms consume thy flesh, yet God is Almighty, and can raise these vile bodies, and make them like to Christs glorious Body, *Phil. 3. 21.* Though for a time we may lye in the dust, yet the time is at hand, when we shall awake and sing, *Esay 26. 19.* Hee that made all things out of nothing, he can raise us out of something.

thing. Thy ashes are precious in his sight, and all thy bones are kept by him, yea the very hairs of thy head are numbered.

6 It may comfort and assure us, that the *Jews* in Gods due time shall be called. Though now they be a scattered, cursed, contemptible people, for their rejecting Christ, yet the Apostle argues from Gods Power, and comforts us with this, that God is able to raise them up again, *Rom. 11. 23.*

See more Uses  
in Mr. Perkins  
on the Creed,  
the first Art.  
1 Vol p. 136,  
142 &c.

2 Obf. *The serious consideration of Gods Omnipotency, should move us to meet him by repentance.* No wise man will stand it out against a potent enemy, that is far too strong for him. We are all by nature Traytors, and Rebels against God, hee is marching against us in wrath, and wee have no way to help our selves, but to meet him, and humble our selves before him (1 *Pet. 5, 6.*) imploring his pity, and his pardon. Hence it is, that the Lord so oft in Scripture, doth set forth to the life his glorious Majesty, and transcendent Sovereignty, (*Job 9. & 36. 24. to 33. & chs. 37. & 38. & 39. & 40. Esay 40. 12. to 27. Jer. 10. 6, 7. Amos 5. 8. & 9. 6.*) We should not only tremble at Gods Word (*Esay 66. 2.*) but also at the consideration of his glorious Majesty, appearing both in his Works of Creation, and Providence.

3 Obf. *It is Gods Prerogative Royal to be the heart-searching God.* None can exactly and thoroughly know the heart but he alone, he only is that *ὁ καρδιογνώστης, Deus cordiscius*, the Heart-seeing, and the Heart-searching God, (*1 Chron. 28. 9. Prov. 17. 3. Jer. 17. 9, 10. Acts 1. 24. & 15. 8. Rev. 2. 23.*) Hee knows all the secret plots and projects, all the turnings and windings of our deceitful souls. Hee knows not only what is in our hearts at present, but also what hath been, and what will be there, (*Psal. 139. 1, 2. Esay 46. 10.*) The Lord trieth the heart, as the furnace trieth the gold; when Mettals come to bee put into the Furnace, there is a great deal of dross in them, so that the Mettal sometimes can hardly be discerned by the Artificer, till the Furnace hath separated the dross from the mettal; so the All-seeing eye of God, which is compared to a flaming fire (*Revel. 1. 14.*) searcheth and separateth good from evil. For,

1 God hath made all hearts, and therefore he must needs know what is in them, They are beasts, and brutish, that will

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S. S.

will not acknowledge this, *Psal.* 94. 8, 9, 10, 11. Every Artificer knowes best the thing that he hath made; a man that makes a Watch, knowes every wheel of the Watch, and every Pin, which another cannot discern. Known to God are all his Works, *Abr.* 15. 18. but the chief of Gods Works is Man, and therefore mans heart must needs be known to him: and if the spirit of man knowes what is in man (*Prov.* 20. 27. *1 Cor.* 2. 11.) then God who hath made that spirit must much more know what is in man; *Joh.* 2. 24, 25. & *1 Joh.* 3. 20.

5  
2 He takes the wise in their owne Plots, which hee could not doe if he did not know their hearts, *Joh.* 5. 13. *1 Cor.* 3. 19. Of all men God delights to befool the grand Politicians of the World; he takes them in their owne traps, and blowes them up, as it were with their own Gun-powder. As a man that will goe beyond a man in discourse, hee must know the Arguments which he will bring, that so hee may bring other Arguments beyond them; so God out-shoots the *Achitophels* of the World in their owne bow. *Haman* was a subtile man, and thought he had made all sure, but we know how the Lord turned his Plot upon his owne pate. In the thing wherein he dealt subtilly, and proudly, the Lord was above him, *Exod.* 18. 11. *Pharaoh* was a subtile Persecutor, yet see how God takes him in his owne Net, *Exod.* 1. 10. hee would work wisely, and will kill all the Male-Children of the Hebrews, yet see how God blasts his Project, for amongst them he saved *Moses*, yea *Pharaohs* Daughter shall bring him up at Court, who shall be *Pharaohs* destruction. Many Politicians walk in the Clouds, as if the Lord should not see them, *Psal.* 94. 7. but they must know, that the Lord is a God of knowledge, and all their actions are weighed by him, *1 Sam.* 2. 3.

3 God is the Judge of all the World; and this hee could not be, if he did not know the hearts, as well as the acts of men. How should he distribute Rewards and Punishments according to mens demerits, if he knew not the intents and thoughts of their hearts? If God did not search the heart, how many secret sins would goe unpunished, and many secret wrongs done to the godly and innocent man goe unrevenged? The Lord therefore searcheth the heart, that hee may give

give to every one according to his works, *Jer. 17. 9, 10.*

Obj. *Prov. 25. 3. The heart of the King is unsearchable, how then can God search the heart?*

1. He speaks in respect of men, God useth many times to endue his Vice-gerents with such depth of wisdom, that it surpasseth the ordinary judgement of Subjects to finde them out; but it doth not surpass Gods knowledge: God could not turn Kings hearts if he knew them not, *1. rov. 21. 1.* When we are to deal with a man whose disposition wee are not acquainted withall, we know not what Motives will perswade him; whereas if we have to deal with one that we know, then we know what Motives will perswade him; so the Lord that made the hearts of Kings, he knows how to perswade them, and win upon them.

2 This searching must not be taken properly, but figuratively; as for man he must search, and by discourse and going from one thing to another, labour to finde out a matter; but it is not so with God, who is perfectly wise, and knowes every thing in it self without discoursing, God is all eye. Suppose a mans whole body were an eye, he need not then to turn himself to see things, for he would see on every side; but he that hath but one eye must turn himself about to see things. But God who is all eye, and seeth into the nature of things, needs no turning about to discourse, and so to search out things as we doe; and therefore one said well, Things that are spoken after the manner of men, must be understood according to the Majesty of God.

3 This Metaphor of searching, is taken, 1. Either from *Students*, who when they come to a hard point, they are put to a great deal of pains to search out the matter before they can know the depth of it. Or, 2. From *Refiners*, the Lord tries the heart (*Prov. 17. 3.*) not only as a Load-stone, but like a Furnace to separate the gold from the dross; when God comes to search the heart of his Elect, he hath a power beyond all other refiners, for look what is good, hee makes it better, and what is nought hee takes away, and makes it good. He turns the vilest earth into the purest Gold, and the vilest Metall, a proud heart, he turns into an humble heart. Hee casts a Christ-despising-soul into the Furnace, and it comes out a high-prizing soul of Christ.

Obj. How is it said, that God only knows and searcheth the hearts of men (1 King. 8. 39.) whereas it is said, that a man knows his own heart (1 Cor. 2. 11.) yea Samuel could tell Saul all that was in his heart, 1 Sam. 9. 19. and if the evil Angels know our hearts, Joh. 13. 2, then good Angels much more.

Ans. There is so great a difference between Creatures knowing of the hearts, and the Creators knowledge of them, that ours is nothing in comparison of his.

1 They differ in respect of their *Original*; God knows the heart of himself, and needs not that any man should tell him, *John 2. ult.* But Angels and Men know by revelation from God, or revelation from others. Thus God revealed to Samuel, which was Saul, that should bee King of Israel, 1 Sam. 9. 15, 17. Thus Elisha knew the covetousness of Gehazi, and Peter the Hypocrisie of Annanias and Sapphira. Thus the good Angels know what is in us by Revelation, and the evil ones by the working of our fancies, they know what will take with us, 1 King. 22. 22.

2 In respect of *Certainty*, we know things but conjecturally, darkly, and by halves; but God knoweth all things exactly, and perfectly; he knowes us better than wee know our selves. Christ knew Peters heart, when hee knew it not himself; and God knew Hazael's heart, when himself could not beleieve the wickedness which was there. Thus hee knowes our thoughts as farre off (Psal. 139. 2.) men may see the thoughts of others near hand, when they begin to break out, and bewray themselves in the face and countenance, in gestures, words, and looks; by these we sometimes pump out what is in men, *Prov. 20. 5.* But this is but conjectural; and we are oft deceived, as we see in David, he thought Absoloms purpose had been sincere, in going to fulfill his Vow at Hebron, and that Achitophel had been a faithful Counsellor. Thus the Disciples took Judas to be like themselves, and therefore when Christ said, *One of you shall betray me*, every one asked, *Master, is it I?* But God did most certainly know Absoloms Hypocrisie, Achitophels Policy, and Judas his Treachery. In our thoughts there is the object which we think on, and the impress of it, as it lieth in our fancy; and this the Angels being Spirits may know, and see what is in the fancy. But now to make up a full thought, there must be an act that perfecteth



seth on this object; that carrieth with it an Affirmative, or Negative, for an hundred men may think on one and the same object, and yet they may act diversly; now because the mind of man may work several ways on one and the same object, the Angels cannot certainly know the hearts of men, which made the Devils Oracles to speak so ambiguously, because they knew not certainly what should come to pass. But God hath a clear and exact knowledge of all things, and perfectly knows all the turnings and windings, all the imaginations and thoughts of our hearts, whether good or bad, sudden or deliberate, past, present, or to come, *Gen. 6. 5. Job 42. 2. Psal. 44. 21.* He knows our thoughts before we think them, *Deut. 31. 21.* though men have fair words, yet hee knowes they have many times foul hearts, *Deut. 5. 28. 29.* God takes notice of every wanton thought which is in our hearts, which made *Job* (ch. 31. 1.) to make a covenant with his eyes, that he might not so much as think on a Maid, lest he should sin against God and displease him, who takes notice of all the motions of our hearts. God took notice of *Sauls* murderous thoughts towards *David*, when he was playing before him, he thought to have murdered him; and of *Felix* his covetous thoughts, when he sent so oft for *Paul*, thinking that money should have been given him. But God in goodness to us, hath lockt up the hearts of men from the knowledge of men, for the preservation of Humane society, for man is a sociable Creature; now if there were a window made in the Soul of every man, to know what is in him, there would bee no living one by another, so vile and fierce we are by nature, (*Titus 2. 3.*) every one hath several ends, and if we could see whose heart opposeth us in the pursuit of them, we should hate them. Besides, every man hath secret sins, which if all the world should know, we should be ashamed to look one another in the face, and afraid one of another.

Woe then to *Quakers*, who assume to themselves Gods Prerogative Royal, of knowing the heart. How oft have they told us, that they know mens hearts (when it may bee they know not their names) so soon as ever they see their faces; they know who are Hypocrites, or prophane, at first sight. But it is no wonder, that those who have printed that they are equal to God, as holy as God, as just as God, as good as God;



God; if they also say, they are as knowing as God. These high-flown Atheistical ones assume more to themselves, than the very glorified Saints or Angels dare doe. Such prodigious Pride, and Blasphemy, will be punished with some signall fall.

2 This must *humble* us in all our approaches before this Omniscient, Heart-searching God. We have not to doe with men; but with the All-seeing God, who cannot, and will not be mocked. We are apt to think highly of our selves, but God knows that by us which we know not by our selves. Wee know but in part, but he knowes us thorowly; and if our Conscience doe accuse us of something, yet he is greater than our Conscience, and knoweth all things. Men may *secretly* and *subtly* hide their sins from men, but nothing is hid from God, he sets our secret sins in the light of his countenance. It is dangerous to plot any thing either against him, or any thing which relates unto him; for as he sees mens sins, so he hath power to punish them. Woe then to such as oppose Gods Truth, these oppose God, and rob his people of the choycest purchase. 2. Such as oppose his Embassadors doe oppose him, he accounts the indignities done to them as done to himself. 3. Such as abuse his people, and despise them for their purity, despise God who made them so.

3 It must make us serious and *sincere* in all that we doe, since we have to doe with a God that searcheth the heart, and ponders the spirits of men; and if they be but a graine too light, his beam will soon discover it, *Prov. 16. 2.* Did we but set the Lord alwaies before us, it would keep us from falling, either on the right hand, or on the left, *Psal. 16. 8.* David kept all Gods Precepts, because he knew that all his wayes were before him, *Psal. 119. 168.* So *Job 24. 21, 22.* There is much in the eye of men to keep us from sin, and quicken us to duty, how much more in Gods All-seeing eye, *Job 24. 17.* He looks upon Sinners with a Vindictive eye. It is said of *Hercules*, and some others, that they had such sparkling eyes that they terrified men, so that they durst not look upon them. This is most true of God in a Spiritual sense; if he but look on *Pharaoh*, and his Host, it puts them all into terror, *Exod. 14. 24.* yea if he but look upon the earth, which never sinned, it trembles before him, *Psal. 97. 4.* Men may dissemble with

with men, but there is none can deceive God. No Sinner is more hated of God than the Hypocrite, because no sin is so directly opposite to his Nature. *Jehu* his zeal was, to settle himself in *Ahab's* Throne, but God sees through such Tiffany-designs, and sayes to such, as the Prophet said to the Wife of *Jeroboam*, *Come in thou Wife of Jeroboam, why feignest thou thy self to be another than thou art?* God will one day smite such painted walls. *Esaü* a cunning Hunter, may get the Vennison of this World, but it is plaine, sincere, single-hearted *Jacob* that gets the blessing. Let us therefore alwaies walk as in the presence of God, as *Enoch* (*Gen. 5. 24.*) *Abraham*, (*Gen. 17. 1.*) and *Hezekiah* did, *Esaü* 38. 3.

4 This should make us to keep a strict warch over our *Thoughts*. God is a Spirit, and he more especially eyes the bent of our spirits. It is not so much our words and workes, as our hearts which the Lord ponders. So that what the Apostle saith of our *words*, is most true of our *Thoughts*; he that offendeth not in thought, the same is a perfect man. He is right indeed, who is right within. When the Lord comes to search men, he ransacks the heart, and observes what imaginations and thoughts lodge there, and judgeth of men accordingly, *Gen. 6. 5.*

But of this at large, in my Comment. on 1 Tim. 3. 2. p. 18, 19.

5 It may inform us, that the holy Scriptures are the Word of God, because of that lively, powerful, heart-searching excellency that is in them, *Heb. 4. 12, 13.* Mens words are dead; but here is living water; sharp and quick, discovering the very thoughts and intents of the heart; wee should not then quarrel with the Word, when it nakedly discovers our selves unto our selves, but fall on our faces and worship God, confessing that he is in his Ministers of a truth (*1 Cor. 14. 24, 25.*) We must bleis, and not blasphem, as some that say, *The Devil is in the Minister, he hath some Familiar, else how could he know my thoughts?* when it is not we that know your thoughts, but it is God who searcheth your hearts, and by his Word doth discover the secrets of your hearts, though wee know not your faces. It is the Lord who directs the Word to the hearts of his people. *Austin* reports of himself that when he had been Preaching to his owne people, he fell from the subject he intended, to confute the *Manichees*. When hee came home, he said to those at dinner with him, Did you not

observe how I went from the subject intended ? they answered yes. Then said he, *Surely the Lord did this for the good of some soul that was present.* Not long after came one *Firmus*, a Merchant to him, with tears in his eyes, blessing God, that had brought him to confute the *Manichees*, whereby he was converted; God is a free Agent, and works when he will, on whom he will, and by whom he will.

6 It serves for *Consolation* many waies.

1. It may comfort us against the reproaches and slanders of the wicked. This comforted *Job*, when his friends accused him falsely, that *the Lord knew the way which he took*, *Job* 23. 10. q. d. Though my friends accuse me for an Hypocrite, yet Lord thou knowest not only an act or two of mine, but thou knowest the very way that I take. He knowes the bene of our Souls, and will reward us accordingly. This upheld *Jeremy* under this very temptation, *Jer.* 15. 10, 15. and *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4, 5. The godly have hidden *Mannah*, which comforts them against the calumnies of the world; and a *white Stone*, which armes them against the black Stones which are thrown at them by the world; and a new *Name*, to comfort them against the nick-names of the world.

2 It may comfort us in all our troubles, that the Lord sees them, *Exod.* 3. 9. *Acts* 7. 34. Our groanings are not hid from him, *Psal.* 38. 9. Though wheels goe cross, yet God hath a wheel in those wheels; Though wee know not how, yet he knowes how; and when it is best to deliver his, *2 Pet.* 2. 9.

3 It may comfort us in point of *Weakness*. It may be thou canst not express thy mind in words, I but the Lord knows our thoughts, and desires, as farre off, even before we think them, and our words before we speak them. Before we call he answers, and if we have but sincere desires, he hath promised to hear them, *Psal.* 10. 17. It may bee that thou art under a *Tentation*, and canst see no faith, nor love in thy heart; yet but God can. Grace is Gods hand-writing in our hearts, (*Jer.* 31. 33.) which he can read, when we cannot; so that as *Paul* said, I know no evil by my self, yet am I not thereby justified; so mayest thou say, I know no good by my self, yet herein am I not condemned.

4 It may encourage us, to be much in secret with God, in secret

See more in  
Mr. Dyle on  
the Heart, cha.  
31. p. 397. &c.

secret Prayer, Meditation, and Communion, *Thy Father which sees in secret, he shall reward thee openly.* Thy secret obedience shall have open recompence. *Jeremy* that wept in secret, had his life given him, when the King had his eyes put out, and many Nobles were slain.

4 Obs. *The Lord can turn our light into darkness.* Hee can turn the morning (which usually brings light with it) into the darkest night. Thus he dealt with *Egypt*, he brought a dismal darkness on them for three dayes, even such darkness as might be felt, *Exod. 10. 21, 22.* So when Christ was Crucified, there came a great darkness on the Land, *Mat. 27. 45.* If we provoke the Lord to anger, he can quickly turn our day into night (*Amos 5. 8.*) and our mirth into mourning. Hee is the God of Nature, and can when pleaseth him invert the order of Nature, and stifle us with gross darkness. The Light is a pleasant thing, but the light of the Gospel, that Supernatural Light, oh how pleasant and precious is that! We may better want the Sun in the Firmament (for that is but a common blessing) than the glorious light of the Gospel, which shewes us the way to eternal life. Wee should therefore bee thankful to God for all manner of Light, and take heed of offending him, who can at once deprive us both of Natural and Supernatural light. He can make our Sun to set at Noon, and darkness to surprize us in the brightest day, and make us run from Sea to Sea to hear a Sermon, and it shall not be granted to us, *Amos 8. 9, 10, 11, 12.* Let us then walk in the light whilst we have the light, lest our unthankfulness deprive us of it, *John 12. 35. Rom. 13. 12, 13.*

5 Obs. If we take the words in the second sense, then observe, *That God is the Maker both of Day and Night.* Hee creates Light, and he creates Darkness; he makes the Morning, and the Evening; the rising, and the setting Sun give praises unto him (*Gen. 1. 5.*) and we are bound to him for both. 1. That he hath given us the Day wherein to serve him; and secondly, that he hath given us the Night, wherein to rest, that we might be fitted for his service.

6 Obs. *God is the most High.* This appears in that all high places are subject to him, whether you take them Literally, or Metaphorically, he treads upon all the high places of the earth, all Mountains, all Idols, all high conceits of men, and what.

See the misery of darkness both Natural and Spiritual, in my Com. on Psal. 82. 5.

See my Com. on Psal. 82. 7.

*Quicquid  
magnum est &  
excelsum in  
terra, huic sub-  
jicitur. Luther.*

whatsoever exalts it self against his Kingdom, he will bring it down. If he touch any of these Mountains they presently vanish into smoke, *Esay 64. 1. Jam. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 5.*

7 Obs. *God is Jehovah.* This is the most proper Name of God, and therefore is so frequently given to him in the Old Testament. S. *Jerome* observes, that there are ten Names given to God in Scripture, of which *Jehovah* is the chief and most proper, and is never given to any but only unto God: It sets forth his eternal, infinite, incomprehensible Self-being, and serves to distinguish him from Idols, which have no life or being in them. Hence it is called, Gods glorious and fearful Name, *Deut. 28. 58.* To let pass those Jewish and Rabbinical niceties, and quiddities about this Name, we have the sum and substance of it in *Exod. 3. 14. & 34. 6. Revel. 1. 4, 8. He is Alpha, and Omega, who is, who was, and who is to come.*

S.

ψ 83. 18

This Name implies

- 1 Gods Self existency.
- 2 Eternity.
- 3 Sovereignty.
- 4 Immutability.
- 5 Fidelity.

\* D. Arrow-  
smith on John  
1. 3. p. 46. 59

1 God is *Jehovah*, one that hath his being in himself, and of himself, and from no other. He is an absolute, perfect, independent Self-being. All Creatures depend on him (*Psal. 104. 27.*) but he needs none of us, *Job 22. 3. & 35. 6, 7.* All have their \* being, and their well-being from him, and therefore great reason we should live unto his praise, *Prov. 16. 1. 3. p. 46. 59 Acts 17. 28. Rom. 11. ult.*

2 He is an Eternal Self-being, without beginning or ending, from everlasting to everlasting, he is God, *Heb. 13. 8.* of all Gods Names this doth most fully set forth Gods eternal Essence. This must comfort us in all our distresses, when all other beings fail, yet God is an eternal being. When the Cisterns are broken, yet this Fountain abides; when Fathers and Mothers dye, yet he lives for ever, *Psal. 18. 46. & 102. 27, 28.* Our Fathers where are they? and the Prophets doe not live for ever; but the God of the Prophets lives for ever. *Zach. 1. 5.*

3 He hath supream, absolute, and unlimited Sovereignty over

over all. Hee is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. All have their dependance on him, but hee depends on none.

4 *Immutability*, hee is I Am, still the same, there is not in him so much as a shadow of changing, *Mal. 3. 6. James 1. 17.*

5 *Fidelity*, he is most true both in his Threatnings and Promises. They are all *Yea*, and *Amen*, and shall certainly be fulfilled first or last to Gods people.

[See more of this Name Jehovah, in *Zegedines, Loc. com. p. 599. River on Exod. 3. 13. Doct. Gouge his Arrows, on Exod. 17. 15. p. 317, &c. V. Wilsons Dist. & Ravanel. in V. Jehova & præ aliis Gerard. Loc. com. Loc. 2. Vol. 1. p. 325. ad p. 235. Edit. ult. Non cum Illyrico in calce clavis Script. p. 354. ad p. 360. Binchius Mel. Theolog. Loc. 2. p. 30. Fullers Miscel. Lib. 2. cap. 6. p. 201. & l. 4. cap. 13. p. 550.]*

Concerning Gods other Attributes, see Doct. *Preston* on the Attributes, *Stock, Larkham, Church his Miscelan, Zanchius, & Lessius de Attributis*, Mr. *Leighs* Body of Divinity, *lib. 2. c. 2. M. Randal* his Treat. of God, and Christ, *p. 19, &c. Mr. Norton* his Orthodox Evangel. *p. 4. 10.*

Obf. 8. *God is the Lord of Hosts.*

This Title is oft given to God, as *1 Sam. 1. 3. & 4. 4. & 2 Sam. 5. 10. Psal. 24. 10.* God is the soveraign Lord of all Creatures, whether visible or invisible, reasonable or unreasonable, living or liveless, they are all his, not only \* because he created them, and preserveth them, but because he governs them, so that they stand continually ready prest for his service, when ever he shall command them, *Psal. 103. 21. Isa. 45. 12.* God hath all Armies in Heaven, Earth, and Hell at his command.

\* *Elohe, Deus,*  
one of Gods  
Titles in the  
Text; is a con-  
tract of *Eloah,*  
and in the plu-  
ral number

*Elohim*, this is one of the most frequent Names of God in Scripture; and denotes unto us that God is the Creator, Governour, and Judge of the World. On this Title see my Com. on *Psal. 82. 1. & Binchius Mellis. Theol. P. 1. p. 30.*

1 He hath the *hosts of Heaven at his beck.* The Angels are ready to execute his will, *Gen. 32. Numb. 2. 22. Job 25. 3.* The Stars of Heaven fight for his people, *Judg. 5. 20. Isa. 40. 26.* Thunder and Lightning, Wind and Hayl observe his commands, *Job 37. 4. & 38. 24. Psal. 18. 14. & 29. 3. & 13. 5, 7. & 148. 8.*



2 He hath *Terrestrial Armies* at his command; as 1 All men whether good or bad, he can make them execute his will even against their own. 2 The Beasts of the field, *Levit. 26. 22. 2 King. 2. 24. & 17. 25.* 3 He hath Armies of Insects, and inferiour Animals to vex his enemies withall, as Frogs, Flies, Lice, Carrerpillars, Locusts, &c. *Exod. 8. Dem. 28. 28. Joel 1. 4. & 2. 25. Amos 7. 1.* and if these will not doe, he hath the *Sea* to drown men; *Gen. 7. 18. Exod. 14. 28.* and the fire to burn them, *Gen. 19.* and the earth to swallow them up alive, *Exod. 15. 12. Numb. 16. 30. & 26. 10.*

3 All the *Devils in Hell* are Gods Serjeants to arrest the wicked, and his Jaylor to keep them fast till the Judgement of the great Day. But of this see more at large before on *Vers. 10. Obs. 5.*

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AN

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179

AN  
EXPOSITION;  
WITH  
Practical OBSERVATIONS  
UPON  
The Fifth Chapter of *Amos*.

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V E R S E 1.

*Hear yee this word which I take up against you, even a lamentation, O house of Israel.*

**I**N this Chapter wee have the summe and substance of the fourth Sermon of the Prophet *Amos*, which contains a Lamentation for the Captivity, and utter desolation, which was coming upon the Kingdome of *Israel* for their obstinacy and Idolatry.

Where wee have 1 A short *Exordium* to quicken attention, verse 1. *Hear this word which I take up against you.*

2 Here is a Commination and denouncing of Gods Judgements against them. 1 More briefly, vers. 2, 3. 2 More amply and Rhetorically, vers. 11, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 27.

3 Here is a Catalogue of those enormities and crying sins which brought these Judgements upon them: As

1 *Unrighteousness*, vers. 7.

2 *Obstinacy and hating of Reproof*, vers. 10.

3 *Cruelty and Oppressing of the poor*, vers. 11.

4 Bribery, ver. 12.

5 *Presumption and vain confidence, in their vocal and instrumental singing, in their sacrifices and hypocritical services, promising themselves safety and deliverance, though they lived in all manner of wickedness, ver. 18, 21, 22, 23.*

The summe of the Prophets Argument is this, *That people which is unrighteous, obstinate, cruel, hypocritical and idolatrous, shall perish; But such are you, O ye house of Israel: Therefore yee shall perish.*

4 Here is an exhortation to Repentance, repeated again and again, to make the deeper impression upon their hearts, that so they might prevent the Judgements approaching, and this is done partly for the Eleas sake that they might not perish with the wicked, and partly for the wickeds sake that they might bee left without excuse.

Here wee have the two parts of Repentance. 1 The *terminus à quo*, from what they must turn, viz. from Idols which cannot help in a day of wrath, ver. 5. and from the evil of sin, which brings with it the evil of punishment, ver. 14, 15.

2 The *terminus ad quem*, to whom they must return, viz. to God, which is oft repeated to shew the great necessity of it, ver. 4, 6, 8, 14, 15, 24. Seek yee the Lord, seek goodness, seek righteousness.

2 Here are Motives to inforce the duty. The first is a *drawing Motive* taken from the benefit which attends Repentance, viz. life and salvation, ver. 4. *Seek yee me, and yee shall live*, and with all the gracious favour and presence of God, ver. 14, 15.

The second is a *driving Motive*, drawn from the evil which will necessarily follow the neglect of it, God will bee to them a consuming fire, ver. 6. *Seek yee the Lord, lest hee break forth like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it.*

A third Motive is drawn from Gods power, which is seen in the *works of Creation*. Hee maketh the seven Stars and Orion, ver. 8. 2 In his works of Providence, *Hee strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong.*

## VERSE 1.

*Hear this word which I take up against you, even a Lamentation, O house of Israel.*

**I**N this Chapter the Lord goes on with his charge against *Israel*, and the Prophet as his Attorney-general doth manage the charge against them. Hee opens the case, shews them their sins, and Gods Judgements coming on them for those sins; yet withall puts them in a way to prevent them, by perswading them to reform the things amiss amongst them.

In this first Verse the Prophet makes as it were an Oyes, calling for silence and attention. *Hear ye this word which I take up against you.* Hee had called for audience twice before *Amos 3. 1. & 4. 1.* but this people had stopt their ears, and hardened their hearts, they were become Sermon-proof, and Judgement-proof, nothing could work upon them, yet the Prophet calls a third time, if by any means hee might work upon them.

This Verse is as it were the Preface to the Sermon, and is set in the front to quicken attention; where we have; **1** The matter to be attended, and that is the word of the Lord published by the Prophet *Amos.* *Hear this word which I take up against you;* or as it is in the Original, which I lift up against you, *Nasda, sustulit;* that is, which I utter against you by Gods command, more clearly, and more fully, with more spirit and life than formerly, so *Job 21. 2.*

**2** Here are the persons against whom this Sermon is intended, and that is the ten Tribes, here called, *The house of Israel,* q.d. I speak not against strangers, but against you, O house of *Israel*, and therefore it concerns you to attend.

**3** Here is the nature of the Sermon, it is a *Lamentation*, or lamentable Prophecie of the utter destruction of *Israel,* q.d. Both *I* and *Hosea*, and other Prophets, have for a long time warned you of approaching judgements, but since you sleight our Threainings, and give your selves to mirth and merriment, I will now take up a *Lamentation* for you, and will mourn for you that will not mourn for your selves.

So that this Lamentation implies first, the deep sense and

*Enab significat  
lamentationem  
amariſſimam.  
Tymouſus.*

*Threnodia ſeu  
carmen lugubre  
quo regni Iſraelitiſ interitus deploratur. Guſtavi.*

*Ego ſolſo ſuper  
vos ſermoſum  
quicor ad luctum  
& lamentum  
cogit, etiamſi  
nunc ſint pra-  
ſtati contra  
Deum. Calvin.  
See Mr. Trap on  
Mal. 1. 1.*

apprehenſion which the Prophet had of that miſery which was coming upon *Iſrael* for their Idolatry, Incredulity, Securiy, and Impenitency. This was to him matter of bitter and great lamentation, as the word imports, *Ezek. 2. 10.* and *19. 1. ult.* and ſuch lamentation the Lord expects from his people, *Ezek. 26. 17.* and *28. 12.* and *32. 2.* Thus *David* lamented for *Saul* and *Jonathan*, *2 Sam. 1. 17.*

Secondly, This Lamentation implies a ſad ſong, a doleful ditty, a burdensome and lamentable Propheſie of diſmal judgements againſt *Iſrael*; that which the Prophet calls a Lamentation here, is oft called a Burden, as *Iſa. 13. 1.* and *22. 13.* *Ezek. 12. 10.* *Nahum 1. 1.* *Hab. 1. 1.* *Zach. 9. 1.* *Mal. 1. 1.*

*q. d.* You laugh at my Threatnings now, but you will finde them an heavy burden ſorely, and that which will bring great lamentation with it.

Queſt. But why doth the Prophet lament for theſe impenitent ſinners that would not lament for themſelves? hee ſhould rather have rejoiced in Gods juſt judgements on them, according to that, *Pſal. 58. 10.* The righteous ſhall rejoyce when hee ſeeth the vengeance.

Anſw. Wee muſt diſtinguiſh of ſinners.

1 Some are within the pale of the Church, and are Gods people by profeſſion, being in Covenant with him, having a remnant of elect ones mingled amongſt them. Now Gods judgements either imminent or preſent on theſe, have been in all ages lamented by the Saints, they have alwayes been deeply affected with the miſery of *Sion*, though their ſins have brought it juſtly upon them, yea and the Lords own bowels do yern over them, even when in juſtice he cannot but puniſh them, *Hos. 6. 4.* and *11. 8.* Beſides we muſt lament the ſins of theſe, even when wee adore Gods juſt judgements on them, and muſt denounce his threatnings againſt them with tears & lamentation.

2 Others are without the Church, and many within, that are malicious, implacable, incorrigible, and incurable enemies to God, his wayes, his worſhip, and his people; now in the deſtruction of ſuch we may, and muſt rejoyce, we are commanded ſo to do, *Pſal. 58. 10.* *Prov. 11. 10.* *Rev. 18. 20.* and *19. 12.*

Cam. Nor that wee may rejoyce in their deſtruction ſimply

simply as they be our enemies, or as they be creatures, but as they are wicked, rebellious creatures, and implacable enemies to God and his wayes, so we may, yea and God himself doth rejoyce in their destruction, *Deut. 28. 63. Prov. 1. 26.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Ministers may sometimes preface as occasion requires, so did Paul, Act. 13. 16. Men of Israel hear, and yet that fear God, give audience.* But of this before on *Amos 4. 1.*

2. *Obs. Ministers must not preach their own inventions, but what God commands them.* Hear the word which God commanded mee to deliver to you. But of this at large before on *Amos 4. 1.*

3. *Ministers must preach Judgement as well as Mercy.* Law as well as Gospel, and Lamentation as well as Consolation. See *Amos 6. 1.*

4. *Tis our duty to bee affected with the miseries of Gods people,* whether they be imminent or present; we must weep with them that weep; and as fellow members of the same mystical body, wee should have compassion one of another, *Rom. 12. 15.*

5. *1 Pet. 3. 8.* Especially this concerns Gods Ministers to com- See more at  
miserate the sad condition of Gods people, and to intercede large on *Amos*  
for them at the Throne of Grace, *Jer. 9. 1. and 18. 10. Joel 2. 6. 6.*

17. So did Moses for *Israel*, *Exod. 32. 31, 32.* and Samuel for *Saul*, *1 Sam. 15. ult.* *Jeremy* writ a whole book of Lamentations for *Jerusalem*, and Christ wept over it, *Luke 19. 41, 42.* Hence the Lord so oft commands the Prophets to take up a Lamentation for the Princes of *Israel*, *Ezek. 19. 1.* yea for *Tyre*, *Ezek. 27. 3.* and for *Egypt*, *Ezek. 32. 2. 16.* and threatens such as neglected this duty, *Ezek. 13. 5.* and *22. 30, 31.* How great then is the sin of those wicked men who mock at such as mourn for them, who hate those which help to keep off judgements from them, who seek the destruction of those which seek their salvation, and desire their death, who use all means to bring them to life; such horrid ingratitude shall not pass without some signal vengeance.

5. *Obs. Such as contemn Gods Judgements, shall at last lament their folly.*

These obdurate sinners scoff at the Prophets Threatnings,  
and



See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 12.

and asked, when will the day of the Lord come? why it shall come upon you in a day that you look not for it, and shall bee a lamentation and a burden that shall sinke you: Patience abused turns into fury, though God bear long, yet hee will not alwayes bear.

VERSE 2.

*The Virgin of Israel is fallen, shee shall no more rise, shee is forsaken upon her Land, there is none to raise her up.*

**I**N the precedent Verse the Prophet tells us of a *Lamentation* given him by God to publish against *Israel*. In this Verse he comes to tell us exegetically what it is, viz. the fatal and final overthrow of the whole Kingdome of *Israel*, set forth in emphatical termes, and variety of words to assure this unbelieving people of the certainty of those Judgements which they should shortly feel. In the words wee have the summe of this Funeral *Lamentation*, or *Samarita's Epitaph*; *The Virgin of Israel is fallen*. Where wee have,

1 A Judgement threatned, and that is a fall. *Israel* is fallen, viz. into the hands of the *Assyrians*.

2 Here are the *persons* upon whom this judgement shall fall, and that is upon the *Virgin of Israel*, or the ten Tribes.

3 Here is the certainty of it, *Is fallen*, that is, they shall as surely come down, as if they were this day in the dust.

Quest. How is *Israel* called a *Virgin*, whereas shee had plaid the Harlot with Idols, and is therefore called an Harlot? Hof. 1. 2.

Ans. Kingdomes and Cities are called *Virgins* in Scripture on several accounts: As 1 when they flourish in riches and renown, and remain unconquered, and unaccustomed to any yoke of servitude; now such in Scripture, though they bee Heathenish and Idolatrous, yet are called *Virgins*: As *Tyre*, Isa. 23. 12. *Babylon*, Isa. 47. 1. and *Egypt*, Jer. 46. 11.

*Virgo Israelis i.  
e. regnum Israel  
quod simile est  
pulchra Virgini  
propter opes, &  
tranquillum  
statum, Piscator*

2 In respect of their Effeminacy, Delicacy, and Wantonness, priding themselves in their Beauty and Bravery, and

and tricking themselves up like Virgins; and thus *Israel* was effeminate, living daintily and deliciously, giving themselves up to feasting, mirth, and musick, *Amos* 6. 4, 5, 6. priding themselves in their wealth, and ornaments, and in this respect they might be called Virgins.

*Israel vocatur Virgo, non propter integritatem, sed propter ornatum & pulchritudinem. Estius in Loc. difficil.*

3 In respect of their weakness, and unbleness to help themselves; so *Israel* shall fall, and be like a poor, helpless, forlorn Virgin, that sits alone in distress without any helper; she shall now be deflowred, and wasted by the *Assyrian*.

4 *Israel* is here called a Virgin after her Apostacy, but this is in relation to former times, before they were Idolatrous, as in *David's* time (before the division of the ten Tribes.) when they served God in purity, without the mixture of humane inventions; and likewise in relation to their duty, shewing what they should have been, and not what now they were; and in this sense *Judah* is also called a Virgin after their Apostasy, *Jer.* 18. 13. & 31. 21. they had both the name of Virgins, but were indeed Idolaters, and by consequence Adulteresses, that broke the Covenant of their God.

5 The City of *Samaria* was a maiden City, it was never subdued or conquered by any Nation, before the *Assyrian* King *Salmaneser* brought it under the yoke of Servitude, and carried the ten Tribes captive into *Assyria* and *Media*; and in this respect it might be called a Virgin.

3 Here is the certainty of this Judgement set forth in the Present Tense, *The Virgin of Israel is fallen*; that is, shee shall as surely fall as if it were already done; and this is usual with the Prophets, to signify the certainty of a thing, by putting it in the Present, or *præterit* Tense. Thus the Scripture speaks of Eastern and Western *Babylon* in the Present Tense, *Babylon is fallen, is fallen*; that is, it shall suddenly, surely, and irrecoverably fall, *Isa.* 21. 9. *Jer.* 51. 8. *Rev.* 14. 8. & 18. 2. So *Jude* 14. *The Lord cometh*, that is, he will as surely come, as if he were now coming to Judgement. This was about forty years before the final overthrow of *Samaria*, that the Prophet fore-told this; yet since God had decreed their fall, he tells them, it shall as surely be effected as if it were done this day; and it is usual with all the Prophets to speak thus assertively, not only because of the certainty of what his

*Præterita propositum est ponit ad maiorem rei certitudinem. Mercet.*

*Cecidit, significat actum instantem & quosdam seculo cecidit, i. e. jam cadere incipit, ac brevi prope casu cadet Babylon. A Lapide.*

denounced, but because from the first denunciation the plague begins, though not discerned, nor sometimes accomplished till many years after.

4 Here is the aggravation of her fall ;

1 She shall fall so that she shall never rise again.

2 She shall be forsaken in her own Land.

3 There shall be none to raise her up.

Many fall but they rise again, but when a Kingdome shall fall from its former splendor and dignity, and never be restored again, that is very sad ; yet this was *Israels* case, they were carried Captive into *Assyria*, and the body of the Kingdome, and generality of the People never returned again ; nor had they ever the face of a Kingdom more, 2 *King.* 17. *Hof.* 4. 5. & 5. 5. When the remainders of *Judah* returned out of the *Babylonish* Captivity to *Jerusalem*, some few of *Israel* joyned themselves with them, and are reckoned with *Judah*, the rest of the ten Tribes being scattered, and dispersed up and down the world, degenerated into *Gentiles*, and some of those dispersed were converted in the Apostolical times, as appears by the inscriptions of the Epistles of *James* and *Peter*.

Obj. But we read in our Saviours time of the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, *Matth* 10. 6. & 15. 24. and that *Nicodemus* was a Master in *Israel*, *Joh.* 3. 10. and therefore some conclude, that the Kingdom of *Israel* was not totally ruined.

Ans. The word *Israel* hath many significations in Scripture, but that in *Matthew* hath relation to the Kingdome of *Judah*, for in Christs time there was no other Kingdome of *Israel* extant but that, and that also was very low when Christ came, as I have shewed on *Amos* 9. 11. and by a Master in *Israel* is meant no more but a Teacher in the Church of God, for the Church is oft called *Israel*, *Psal.* 115. 13. *Galat.* 6. 16.

Obj. It was fore-told, that the ten Tribes should be made one with *Judah*, and should returne with them, *Ezek.* 37. 16, 17, 19, 22.

A. This is spoken of Gospel times, and implies a Spiritual, not a Corporal returning of a remnant of those despised and dispersed ones in the dayes of the Messiah, who should be united to *Judah*, and by the preaching of the Gospel be brought into the unity of the Church.

*Shee is forsaken upon her Land.*

Shee had forsaken God, and now all desert and forsake her; shee had laid Piety and Justice in the dust, and now God resolves to lay her in the dust, she shall be smitten to the earth, and dash't against it by the *Assyrian* with such force, that like *Nitteſca, dere-  
liſſa, deſerta,  
abjeſſa, humi  
projecta.* an earthen pot it shall never be sodred together again.

And which greatly aggravates their misery, all this should happen to them in their own Land, they should want men to help them in their owne Land, as appears in the next verse. They should be afflicted and brought low, not in an enemies Country, but even in their owne; they should be slaughtered and enslaved in the sight of their owne Country, which had been like a Mother and Nurse unto them, and was dearly beloved of them. It aggravates a Virgins misery, to be slaine in the sight of her owne Mother.

*There is none to raise her up.*

God will not, and then Creatures cannot. Shee shall fall without any help or hope of restauration, no neighbour Nation shall once reach out an helping hand to raise her out of the dust, but there let her lye, like one that is felled to the ground, and not able to rise of himself, and forsaken of all others must needs remaine as he fell; so *Israel* should never recover his pristine splendor, and flourishing condition, though some remnants should remaine, or as it followes in the next verse.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin layes famous and flourishing Kingdoms in the dust.*

Those Maiden-Cities and Kingdoms which were never toucht, nor taken, yet if sin raigh in them (as it did in *Samarita*) it will ruine them. Where are the *Babylonian*; *Persian*, *Grecian* Monarchies, which were sometimes famous and flourishing, and the terrour of the world? they are long since laid in the dust.

2 *Impenitent sinners shall certainly perish.*

Though they may flourish for a time, yet when their sin is ripe, they shall come down; and therefore the Prophet speaks in the Present Tense, *Israel is fallen*; that is, he shall as certainly fall as if he were down already. So *Babylon* that lives

in Luxury and security, shall at last be burnt, *Revelat. 18. 7. 8, 9, 10.*

3 *When God is against us, all forsake us.*

See Mr. Green-  
hill on Ezek. 9.  
2. p. 211.

Israel is forsaken in his owne Land, and so sadly forsaken, that there is not one to raise him up. The Land did formerly abound with men, yet now they have none to help them in their misery; to the dust they must, and there they lye. As God will not cast away the righteous man, but will assist him in his troubles; so he will not take a wicked man by the hand, *Job 8. 10.* but as he brings them into trouble, so he leaves them there, *Ezek. 12. 20. & 29. 5.* his owne he will not leave, and if men will not succour them, yet he will, *Job 5. 19. Jer. 30. 17.* he will give his not only the grace, but also the blessing of peace, *Psal. 29. 11. Lewis. 26. 6.* when our wayes please him, then all are at peace with us, *Prov. 26. 7. 2 Chro. 30. 9.*

4 *God oft retaliates sinners, and payes them in their owne coyn.*

Israel that forsook God, is now forsaken of all, and those that overthrew Justice, and oppressed the poor, are now overthrown themselves, and oppressed by others. But of this see *Amos 6. ult. Obi. 8.*

### VERSE 3.

*For thus saith the Lord God, the City that went out by a thousand shall leave an hundred, and that which went forth by an hundred, shall leave ten to the house of Israel.*

**W**HAT the Prophet had spoken before in general, now he comes to expresse more plainly and particularly, viz. That the Kingdome of Israel should perish; yet not so totally, but that a remnant should be spared; though the body of the people should be cut off, yet a decimation should live to praise God.

So that in this verse we have the reason of the Prophets lamentation and doleful ditty, and that is the great havock which God would make amongst this people; he would cut off nine parts, and leave but a tenth. When the *Roman Armies* did mutiny, the Commanders did use to decimate them, punishing

nishing every tenth man. But the Lord goes further here, being incensed against *Israel*, hee tells them, that by the Sword, by Captivity, by the Pestilence and Famine, hee would make such a slaughter amongst them, that the City which went out by a thousand, should bee brought to an hundred, and an hundred to ten; that is, of a great multitude very few should return. Such a woful decimation there should bee amongst them, that very few should escape. The like Threatning wee have set forth under another Metaphor, *Amos 3. 12.* *As the Shepherd taketh out of the mouth of the Lion, two legs, or the peece of an ear, so shall the children of Israel bee taken out of Samaria, &c. q.d.* as a Shepherd when a Lion hath been devouring his flock, findes some mangled remains of a leg, or an ear; so shall it bee with *Israel*, some one or two shall escape the general slaughter and Captivity.

*The City that went out by a thousand*; that is, The City which had a thousand Inhabitants passing to and fro through the gates thereof; or more genuinely, The City which sent forth a thousand able men to the Wars, or that could furnish, and set out a thousand men fit to bear Arms, shall have but an hundred left. The Prophet seems to allude to that of *Moses*, *Deut. 1. 15*, where the people are divided under Captains over thousands, and Captains over hundreds.

This Threatning was partly fulfilled in the three years siege of *Samaria*; *2 King. 18. 10.* and partly after, when there was a great devastation of men amongst them.

Lastly, To assure them of the reality and truth of all that hee had spoken, hee brings in the Lord asserting it, *Thus saith the Lord God, q.d.* You have not to do with impotent men, but with an Omnipotent God, who both can and will execute his judgements upon the heads of the wicked.

The summe of all is this, *So few shall bee left alive after the long and hard sieges of the Assyrians, that in those Cities of Israel out of which a thousand able men had went to go forth to War, now there should be left but an hundred, and an hundred shall be brought to ten, saith the Lord who doth this.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

*Sin is the grand depopulator of a Kingdome. It makes Cities that*



that go out by thousands to return by hundreds, and reduce their hundreds to tens. Wee use to complain of such as unpeopled Towns and Villages; sin is the Arch-depopulation of Towns and Cities, it brings the Sword, Plague and Famine upon Nations, which sweep men away by thousands. As obedience multiplies a people, and makes them like the sand of the Sea for multitude, *1 King. 4. 20.* So disobedience makes men few in number, which were before as the Stars of heaven for multitude, *Deut. 28. 62.* We should therefore unanimously rise in arms against this Cut-throat sin; if an enemy should come to Town that had killed our fathers, mothers, wives and children, and robbed us of all our pleasant things, with what indignation and fury would men, women and children joyntly rise to ruine such an enemy? Sin is this adversary, it robs Sovereigns of their subjects, Pastors of their people, and robs us of our dearest relations. We should therefore do by it as the Jews did by Paul (whom they lookt upon as their adversary, *Act. 22. 27, 28.*) *when they saw him, they stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him, saying, Men of Israel help, This is he that is against this people, and against the Law, and against this place.* So should we encourage each other against sin, and suppress it, saying, Magistrates, Ministers, men and brethren help, this is that which destroyes our people, wastes our Cities, unpeoples our Towns, opposeth the Laws, and brings confusion every where.

2 Obs. *In the midst of judgement, God remembers mercy.* All had deserved death here, yet such is his clemency that hee spares a Tenth, and leaves a remnant, *Isa. 1. 9.* and *6. 11, 12, 13.* 'Tis the Lords singular mercy that any remain alive, and it is his overflowing goodness that wee are not all utterly consumed, and hurled out of the world at once, *Lam. 3. 22.* In the midst of these devastations, here is a gleaning left to praise him.

3 Obs. *The threatnings of Gods Ministers are Gods threatnings.* Thus saith the Lord, the City that went out by a thousand, shall leave an hundred. 'Tis not I (saith *Amos*) but the Lord by mee his weak instrument, that tells you this. Wee are Ambassadors for Christ, *2 Cor. 5. 20.* Now the words of an Ambassador are esteemed as the words of him that sent him. This made *Cornelius* (though a Souldier and a Commander) yet to set himself as in Gods presence, and so to hear as if God himself spake to him, *Act. 10. 33.* and so did the *Thessalonians*,  
1 Thess.

1 Thess. 2. 13. when our preaching agrees with the word of God, it is to bee esteemed as the word of God himself. If this were truly beleev'd, it would make us come with other affections to hear the word than most now do.

## VERSE 4.

*For thus saith the Lord unto the house of Israel, seek ye me, and ye shall live.*

**T**He Prophet having shewed this people their misery, and affrighted them with the Threatnings, hee comes now unto the *Remedy*, and shews them how they may prevent all that misery which like a flood was rushing in upon them, especially for their Idolatry, and that is by Repentance, by forsaking their Idols, and turning to the Lord. Where there is no ground of hope, people grow desperate and run from God, and therefore the Prophet gives them some glimpse of mercy, *inviting them once and again to seek the Lord*, that so they might prevent his fury.

In the words we have 1 A preface, *Thus saith the Lord*. This is oft used before by this our Prophet, in the first, second, third, and fourth Chapters: and this hee doth, 1 To quicken attention, 2 To make them attend with the greater reverence and fear, since it is the word of God, and not of man; 3 To assure them of the certainty and truth of what hee spake, and that it should bee certainly and suddenly effected, for hee that is Almighty hath said it.

See more in  
D. Benefield  
on Amos 1:3, 6.

2 Here are the persons to whom hee speaks, *viz. To the house of Israel, i.e. to the ten Tribes*. The invitation is general, to take off all excuse, that none might say, They were not exhorted to the duty.

3 Here is a Precept, *Seek ye me*.

Where wee have { 1 The Act, *Seek*,  
                          { 2 The Object, *Me*.

4 A Promise, *And ye shall live*.

The Precept is short, but very comprehensive. It is indeed a brief of the whole body of Religion, or a summary of the whole duty of man. The Scripture doth in many places epitomize our duties, reducing them sometimes to eleven heads,

as *Psal.* 15. Sometimes to six, as *Isa.* 33. 15. and *Heb.* 6. 1. 2. Sometimes to three, viz. Justice, Mercy, and humble walking with God, *Micah* 6. 8. Our Saviour hath epitomized them, and reduced them all unto two, viz. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self.* But our Prophet here comes and summes them all up in one, saying, *Seek the Lord.*

Tis not *baqash*,  
voluit petere,  
but *Parash*, ac-  
curate, diligen-  
tissime, & sum-  
ma cura que-  
rere.

Tis not  
ζητήσατε,  
querite, but  
ἐκζητήσατε,  
diligenter in-  
quirete.

*Chisides*, qua-  
circa.

The word *Seek* is emphatical, and signifies not a bare wish-  
ing or woulding, or some cold velleities, but an earnest, ac-  
curate, exquisite inquiring after God, and his wayes; and  
therefore the Septuagint render it by a compound word which  
signifies to seek out with earnestness and diligence till wee  
finde the Lord. The Apostle useth the same word, *Heb.* 11. 6.  
*The Lord is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

The word implies labour, industry, and constancy, wee  
must never rest till wee have found the Lord, as the woman  
that had lost her goat, continued seeking till shee had found  
it, *Luke* 15. 8.

3 Here is the causative particle, *For*, which may bee ren-  
dered, *therefore*, and then the sense will bee more current, thus,  
*q.d.* Since the Lord hath threatned to make such havock amongst  
you, therefore seek him sincerely that yee may live, for hee desires  
not your ruine, but your returning.

Yet some make the particle redundant here, and look up-  
on it onely as an expletive particle, oft so used by the *He-  
brews*. The sense is here entire without it.

4 Here is the object of our seeking, and that is *God*, *Seek  
ye mee*, Excellent things are the object of our desires; now  
there is none like God, and therefore none to bee desired like  
him. Hee is our Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, ours in all  
sweet Relations, our Father, Husband, Lord, King, &c. and  
therefore to bee sought and served by us in an especial manner.  
One of these obligations call for observance and duty, but  
when all shall concenter, and meet in one, how great should  
our observance bee.

2 This seeking of God implies a sincere turning to him, a  
loving him with all our heart, a seeking him simply for him-  
self, it notes a trusting in him, a fear to offend him, a forsaking  
of all Idols and false wayes (as it follows in the next verse)  
delighting only in his pure word and worship, 1 *Chron.* 16. 10.  
and

and praying to him, *Pfal.* 34. 4. *Matth.* 7. 7. It implies also an obeying his Commands, *2 Chron.* 14. 4. and seeking his face and favour at all times, *Pfal.* 27. 10. *Isa.* 55. 6. These are those things above, which we are commanded to seek, *Colos.* 3. 1.

Thus we see, what a Magazine of matter is comprehended in this little Precept, *Seek ye me.*

Obj. *This command to seek God (say Papists and Armini-ans) implies, that we have Free-will of our selves to seek him, and turn to him, else why doth the Lord command us so to doe, if we had no power to doe it?* *V. Gerhard. Loc. com. de lib. arbit. Tom. 2. ff. 73. mibi. p. 225. edit. ult.*

*Ans.* It doth not follow, that because the Lord commands us to seek him, therefore we have power of our selves to doe it. For,

1 These commands shew us our duty, but not our ability; they shew what we ought to be, but not what we are.

2 Yet these Exhortations are not in vain, for the Lord makes them effectual in the hearts of his people; what he bids them doe, he enables them in some measure to doe.

3 The Lord had a remnant of his Elect mingled amongst this heap of chaff, and their wills being changed, and made conformable to Gods will, are willing and ready to seek and serve him.

4 Hereby the wicked are made more inexcusable, and their malice and obstinacy made more apparent to the world, since they stand out against so many invitations to come in.

[Against Free-will, see *Davenants Determ.* Q. 9. p. 45. *D. Sibbs, Concio ad clernm*, p. 69. *Laurent. in Apoc.* 2. 5. p. 125. *Camero Theses de Grat. & Lib. arb.* p. 273. ad 296. *Parans contra Bellar.* Tom. 1. Totaliter. *Alting, Loc. com.* P. 2. p. 460. & *Hornbec. contra Socin.* l. 3. c. 5. p. 611. *Brochmand Cas. Conf. de homine primo*, cap. 1. p. 134. folio. *Waleus Lo. com.* P. 1. p. 16. & p. 437. *Mr. Burges's* against *Orig. sin.* l. 2. ch. 4. p. 289. *Rolloc in Rom.* 8. p. 152, &c. *Dr. Arrowsmith on John* 1. 13. p. 189. & 198, *Mr. Case Morn. Lect. quarto*, p. 207.]

5 Here is a promise to encourage them to seek the Lord, drawn *ab illi*, from the benefit they should reap thereby, *Yee shall live*, or live yee; the Imperative Mood is put for the Fu-

See more in my  
Beauty of Ho-  
liness, p. 677. &c

ture sense, by an usual Hebraism, *Prov. 3. 4. & 4. 4.* to shew the certainty of a thing, as here, Seek the Lord and live; that is, yee shall certainly live:

You shall have a { Natural }  
                                  { Spiritual } Life.  
                                  { Eternal }

1 If you seek the Lord, and return to him, you shall have your *Natural life* prolonged; whereas you are in danger of dying by the hand of the *Assyrian*, yet doe but return to me unfeignedly, and you shall experimentally find that your lives shall be given you for a prey; at least yee shall not be utterly destroyed, but instead of Warre, you shall have peace and prosperity in your borders. This seems to be the most genuine sense of this place (though we may not exclude the other, for it is a known Rule, that *it is safe taking the words in the largest sense*, if neither matter, phrase, nor scope hinder) for in the fore-going verse, the Lord tells them what slaughter he would make amongst them, therefore he bids them here, returne and live.

*Sub nomine vi-  
tae Hebraei om-  
nem hominis fe-  
licitatem com-  
plecti solent.  
Gualter.*

Yet we may not solely confine it to a Natural life, because it is a Legal promise, and they usually doe comprehend Spiritual mercies in them. The Hebrews frequently under the name of *Life*, doe comprehend all manner of prosperity and felicity, both Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal, *Deut. 4. 1. & 5. ult. Psal. 34. 12. & 133. 8. Prov. 4. 4. Ezek. 18. 9.* The like expression we use at this day, at the Inauguration of Kings, when we cry, *Vivat Rex*, let the King live; that is, all health, prosperity, and happiness attend him.

2 You shall live a *spiritual life* of Grace here, your souls shall enjoy communion with God, they shall live to him here, and at last shall live with him for ever; for Grace is the suburbs of glory.

3 You shall live eternally, *Ezek. 18. 17. ult.*

Obj. But had not the Lord decreed the destruction of this people, how then doth he bid them return and live?

A. Such threatnings of Temporal Judgements are not alwayes absolute, bur conditional, viz. if they repent not, I will destroy them; and though this condition be not alwayes expressed, yet it is understood, as appears by that notable place,

*Jer.*

*Jer.* 18. 7, 8, 9, 10. so that when people repent of their sin, God will repent of the punishment, and stay the execution of the sentence which he had denounced against them, as he did by the *Niivivies*. The change is in us, and not in God.

*Dens novis mutare sententiam, si nos novimus mutare mores. Aug.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Such as seek God rightly, shall live assuredly.*

I say, such as seek God rightly, which cuts off many pretenders to religion, who seem to seek and serve the Lord, but it is feignedly, and hypocritically; they halt between God and *Baal*, between Christ and Belial; like *Agrippa*, they are almost, but not altogether Christians; they have a name to live, but they are dead indeed.

2 Others seek for the living amongst the dead. They seek the Lord amongst the traditions and customs of men. Such mens religion is vain, *Mat.* 15. 9. *Amos* 5. 5.

3 Others seek, but it is too late; like *Esau*, that never cries till he had lost the Blessing. So those, *Luke* 13. 24, 25.

4 Others instead of seeking the Lord, sit all the day idle, they forget the Lord days without number, he is not in any of their thoughts, *Jer.* 2. 32. It is not the somnolent, but the violent that get heaven, *Mat.* 11. 12. where then will those Idle, Atheistical Seekers of our time appear, who are meer Scep- ticks in religion, that question every thing, but beleeve and practice nothing? some of them have been Professors this forty years, yet now they are to seek their religion. These men have laid good foundations the while, that are going out of the world, before they know how to live in the world; when the Lord hath so clearly shewed us what he requires of us, *Micah* 6. 8. what madness is it to be still running after New Lights, which are no Lights for directions?

5 Others instead of seeking God, they persecute those that doe sincerely seek him, like the Scribes and Pharisees, that would neither follow Christ themselves, nor suffer others so to doe. Scribes are prepared for scorners, and such mockers shall have their bonds made strong, *Isa.* 28. 22.

6 Others seek, but it is amiss; for they seek riches, honour, pleasures, instead of God, and things above. Those three are the Worlds Trinity, they are the grand Intemperances of our times.



David tells us, there be many of this stamp, *Psal. 4. 6. Many say, who will shew us goods? Paul goes further, and tells us, All men seek their owne ease, wealth, ends, and respects; that is, All comparatively, they are but few that seek the things of Christ, Phil. 3. 21.*

Q. Since there are so many Seekers, and so few good ones, how must I seek aright?

A. That you may seek the Lord and find him, you must seek him, *3/a. 55. 6.*

- 1 Early.
- 2 Sincerely.
- 3 Zealously.
- 4 Sensibly.
- 5 Constantly.
- 6 Regularly.

1 Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him early, in the morning of their youth, whilst the day of their Visitation lasts. To such the Promise runs, *Prov. 8. 17. They that seek me early shall find me.* It was *Josias* commendation, that when he was young, and but sixteen years old, he began to seek and serve the Lord, *2 Chron. 34. 1, 3.* and *Timothy* knew the Scriptures from a Childe, *2 Tim. 3. 15.*

See eight Reasons for this in *Mr. Gataker's Ser. on Mat. 6. 33. p. 43. folio, and Mr. Burges's, Spi. Refinings, Ser. 75. p. 453.*

We must also seek him orderly, seek his Kingdome in the first place, both before, and above all other things, *Matth. 6. 33.*

2 Sincerely and cordially, not hollowly and complementally. We must seek him with all our might, to such the Promises run, that they shall find him, *Deut. 4. 29. 2 Chron. 15. 15. Jer. 29. 13. Then shall yee seek me and find me, when yee shall search for me with all your heart.* Thus *David* sought him, and found him, *Psal. 119. 10.* never any mist that ever sought him in truth, *Psal. 145. 18.* If we be the genuine Seed of plaine, sincere *Jacob*, we shall never seek his face in vain, *Isa. 45. 19.* before they call; he will answer such, and will run to meet them, as he did the Prodigal, *Isa. 65. 24. Luke 15. 18, 19, 20.*

Yea, a wicked *Ahab* shall not altogether seek to God in vain; and if the shadow can doe so much, what will the substance and real seeking of God doe?

3 We must seek him *zealously*, and *earnestly*; *Magna magis*, such great things must be sought with *ardent* affections, *Dent. 15. 5.* sleight seeking loseth all. Precious things are not easily attained. Even the worlds wealth comes not with a wish, much less heavenly treasures. They that will have them must *ask*, and if that will not doe they must *seek*, if seeking will not doe they must be more importunate, and *knock*; it is not a bare Repetition, but a *Gradation*, *Mat. 7. 7.* wee must seek as men doe for silver, and gold, with utmost diligence, *Prov. 2. 4.* let not the children of this world be wiser, and more industrious for their trash, than we for true treasure. Remember, that none shall be rewarded fully, but such as seek him *diligently*, *Heb. 11. 6.*

*Pulsandi metaphoram ardentem, cum obsecra omnia assidue precandi perurpimus. Caritatem.*

4 *Sensibly*. See how we are undone without him, though we were Lords of all the world, yet without the favour of God, who is Lord of all, we are nothing. Sense of our wants will sharpen our desires after him, and make us resolve with *David*, to give no rest to our eyes, nor slumber to our eye-lids till wee have found him; *Psal. 132. 4.*

5 *Constantly*. *1 Chron. 16. 11.* We must never rest till wee have found him, persevere in the use of all good means, as Prayer, Meditation, &c. resolve to take no denial; importunity will doe much. Comfort will come in the end, and will abundantly recompence all our waiting. Though hope deferred may make the heart sick, yet when it comes it will be as a tree of life, *Prov. 13. 12.*

6 *Regularly*. We must inquire for the good old way of Parity and Peace and walk therein, *Jer. 6. 16.* we must not walk according to the superstitious Customs and Canons of men; but according to the Canon of Gods Word. *Galas. 6. 16.*

Q. But what benefit shall I have by seeking God?

A: Thou shalt have *Life*, and that is a very powerful motive; life is so sweet and desirable a thing, that the Devil could say, *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life*, *Job 2. 4.*

Now Piery hath the promise. 1. Of *Life Temporal*, so farre See my Beauty as shall be good for the righteous, *Psal. 34. 12. & 37. 3. Prov. 17. & 22. 4.* of Holiness, *ch. 7. obj. 4.*

2. You shall have *Spiritual life*, *Isa. 55. 3. Ezek. 16. 6.*

See the excellency of this spiritual life in Mr. Lawrence his life of faith p. 7. &c. and Mr. Obad. Sedgwick on Isa. 55. 3. ch. 13. p. 489.

which is indeed the only excellent, sweet, and durable life. Natural life is common, every wicked man lives it, and it is embittered with many crosses, and it lasteth not, it is a vapour that suddenly vanisheth; but this spiritual life is a special, comfortable, endless life, death it self cannot extinguish it.

3 If this be not enough, you shall have *Eternal life*, Joh. 3. 16. and 6. 51. and 17. 3.

## VERS 25.

*But seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba, for Gilgal shall surely go into Captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought.*

**T**Rue Repentance consists of two parts, 1 *Terminus à quo*, from what wee must turn; 2 *Terminus ad quem*, to whom wee must turn. In the foregoing verse, the Prophet sets down positively and affirmatively whom wee must seek, and to whom wee must turn, and that is to the Lord. Hee comes now to shew us negatively, what wee must not do, and what wee must not seek, and that is *Idols*. Seek the Lord, but seek not Idols. God puts a But and Block in their way to keep them from them. *But seek not Bethel*. God can do all things; but Idols can do nothing; great reason then wee should forsake them, and cleave onely to God, who would have us first Table-men to worship him according to his own will revealed in his word; and then second Table-men, in righteousness towards our neighbour, vers. 15.

In the words wee have 1. A Dehortation from Idolatry, to this end they must

Shun  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Bethel,} \\ \text{Gilgal, and} \\ \text{Beersheba.} \end{array} \right\}$  Three places infested with Idolatry.

1 That *Bethel* and *Gilgal* were such, I have shewed before at large on *Amos 4. 4.* *Bethel* was the place where *Joseph* set up a golden Calf.

*Gilgal* was a City full of Idols, *Hos. 4. 15.* and *12. 11.*

*Beersheba* was a City in Canaan where *Abraham* had formerly dwelt, *Gen. 21. 31. 32. 33.* here God appeared to *Isaac*,

*Gen.*

Gen. 26. 14. and here Jacob sacrificed, Gen. 26. 25. This made these superstitious people think that there was more holiness in this place than in others, and therefore hither they came, when God had ordained them to go to Jerusalem.

This City was afterwards allotted to the Tribe of Judah, Josh. 15. 28. and 1 King. 19. 8. yet it was inhabited by the Tribe of Simeon, Josh. 19. 2. It was situate on the utmost South-border of the Land of Canaan, as Dan was on the North. See more on Amos 8. ult. It was a City given to Idolatry, as Bethel and Gilgal were, and therefore the Lord giveth a strict injunction here, that they should not go to any of them.

*But seek not Bethel, &c.*

9. d. If you will bee my people, you must cast away your Idols, you must not go to worship the golden Calf at Bethel, nor to the High-places and Idolatrous Altars at Gilgal and Beersheba, for these places shall perish with the Idols that are in them.

*Pass not to Beersheba.*

The Kingdome of Israel was divided from the Kingdome of Judah, yet so mad were this people on Idols, that they will pass over the Country of Judah after them; when they had too many at home already.

2 To strengthen the Dehortation, here is a reason added, drawn from the danger which would follow if they followed Idols, both they and their Idols should perish. For Gilgal shall surely go into Captivity; that is, the Inhabitants of Gilgal (*Met. subj.*) going they shall go, i. e. they shall suddenly and certainly go into Captivity by the hand of the Assyrian. There is an elegant Paronomasy in the words. Gilgal signifies rowling, Gilgal shall rowl to ruine; or rowling bee shall speedily rowl into Captivity. They trusted in this place for safety, but both they and it should perish.

*Gilgal, Gale, jigle, migratio, migrando, migrabitur, vel volvendo volvetur. See more in my Schools-Guard, on the figure Paronomasia.*

*And Bethel shall come to nought.*

Bethel signifies the house of God, but by reason of its Idolatry, is called Beth-aven, Hof. 4. 15. a house of vanity and iniquity, Hof. 3. 8. and 10. 5.

Aven signifies an Idol, vanity, inanity, and nought, and therefore the ruine of Bethel is set forth by this Title. Bethel shall be Aven; or bee brought to nought; that is, it shall bee totally ruined, and nothing shall remain of it; but the prints of Gods indignation against it.

*Aven, mendacium, vanitas, inanis.*

So that it is great folly for any to run to such Idolatrous places for shelter, which can neither defend themselves from ruine, nor their Idols from spoyl, *Hof. 10. 5, 6.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Idolatrous places must bee shunned.* As they might not go to Bethel, Gilgal, or Beersheba, so wee may not go to Spain, Italy, France, &c. with the least hankering after their Idols; if you do Satan will quickly make a prey of you; for sin, especially the sin of Idolatry, is like Bird-lime, if a man go once to touch it, hee will bee so intangled in it, that hee cannot easily be shut of it. Hence it is that the Lord so oft commands us to shun wicked society for fear of infection, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 5. p.  
138. &c.

Against such,  
see B. Hall's  
*Quo vadis?* p.  
639. folio.

How great then is the sin of those, that do spontaneously travel into Idolatrous Countries needlessly? such oft-times return infected both in body and soul. *Jeroboam* that travelled into Egypt, brought home the Idolatry of Egypt with him, with which hee infected all Israel.

2 Obs. *True converts must forsake Idols.* They must say with repenting Ephraim, *What have I to do any more with Idols?* *Hof. 14. 8.* Many would fain serve the Lord and their Idols too, but that will not be, if you will bee mine, you must renounce your Idols, saith God, *You must forget your kindred, and your fathers house,* *Psal. 45. 10.* that is, wee must abandon all those corruptions which wee are strongly inclined unto by nature; and those Idolatrous, and superstitious practises, which wee were brought up in; wee must renounce them all, and give up our selves intirely to Christ our spiritual Husband, then, and not till then will hee take pleasure in us, and desire our beauty. Such as desire to have communion with God, must first put away their Idols, *Gen. 35. 1, 2. Josh. 24. 22, 23. Judg. 10. 16. 1 Sam. 7. 3. Psal. 16. 4, 5.* True converts turn from those vanities to the living God, *Act. 14. 15.* and have a special command given them to *keep themselves pure from Idols,* *1 Joh. 5. 21.* They know that the Lord is a jealous God, and cannot endure corivals, nor to have his worship mixt with the inventions and fancies of men. As I have shewed at large before

fore

fore on *Amos* 4:4. God cannot abide halving and halving between two opinions, *1 King* 18. 21. if we will Worship God, we must abhor Idols; for we cannot serve both, *Josh* 24. 14. 15. No man can serve two such contrary Masters, that have contrary commands, wayes, and ends. There can be no communion between Christ and Belial, *2 Corinth* 6. 15. and therefore they that will goe to \* Mals with their bodies, pretending that they keep their hearts for God, are meer dissemblers. They partake with Idolaters in their sin, harden them in their Idolatry, and sin against the Prophets counsel here, that forbids men to goe after Idols. *1. 21. 11.*

Multi sunt ho-  
die mediatores,  
qui dum vi-  
dent non posse  
improbari co-  
squam doctri-  
nam, vellet a-  
equid medium  
fingeret, i. e. vel-  
lent reconcilia-  
re Papatum cum  
doctrinā E-  
vangeliū, et  
Propheta offer-  
dit talem mix-

turam non posse ferri a Deo. Calvin in locum. \* Against going to Mals, see Willets Synopf.  
Controverf. 13. p. 698. D. Geo. Abbots Thesis, Quæst. 3. p. 139. Perkins Cal. Confe. p.  
89. B. Halls Cal. Confe. Dec. 3. c. 13. p. 183. Edit. tit.

### 3 Obs. Superstition is a toylsome thing.

It makes men that they cannot rest, but they must run up and down, now to Bethel, anon to Gilgal, and then traverſe the Country, and goe a Perigrination to Beersheba; so mad are men upon Idols, that they are not content with those at home, but they must be gadding abroad after more. Thus the Papists at this day, though they have Idols more than a good many at home, yet must goe a Perigrination after more; and here see the perverse nature of man, how directly opposite it is to God, he bids us goe one way, and we goe quite another. He bids us goe to Jerusalem; and they goe one to Dan, another to Bethel, another to Gilgal, and a fourth to Beersheba. So true is that, *Homo est inversus decalogus*, Man is a perverse, cross-grained-peece to all Gods holy commands.

See more on  
*Amos* 8. ult.  
Obs. 5. & Mr.  
Greenhil on E-  
zek. 10. 27.  
Obs. 4. p. 87, 88.

### 4 Obs. Idolatry brings desolation and ruine upon Cities and Kingdoms.

Gilgal shall goe into Captivity, and Bethel shall come to nought, and the Virgin of Israel shall fall. When Bethel Gods House, shall become Beth-aven, a house of Idols and Vaniry, then follows Beth-any, an house of misery and affliction. They that follow such lying vanities forsake their owne mercies. Idols themselves are most vain, Vaniry, and things of nought. and nothing doe they bring but nought with them. Hence the Scripture calls them, *Ehlim*, things of nought, *Levit* 19. 4. *1 Chron* 16. 26. *Psal* 96. 5.

1 Fe. 5. 21.

5



2 *Gnathabim*, Sorrows, because they bring men to sorrows, captivity, and misery, 1 Sam. 31. 9. Psal. 16. 4. & 115. 4.

3 *Gillulim*, filthy dung and excrements, because they are loathsome to God, Levit. 26. 30. Deut. 29. 17. Ezek. 6. 4. 5. 6.

4 *Shicuisim*, detestable, loathsome abominations, Ezek. 7. 20. & 11. 21. & 20. 8. Jer. 32. 34.

5 *Segnirim*, Devils; such as worship Idols, are said not to Worship God, but Devils. They forsake the Lord and his Worship, to worship Devils, Levit. 17. 7. Deut. 32. 17. 2 Chron. 11. 15. 1 Cor. 10. 20, 21. Rev. 9. 20.

Great reason then that we should abominate Idols, which bring such sorrow and misery upon places, incensing the Lord to set fire upon them, as it follows in the next verse.

#### VERSE 6.

*Seek the Lord and ye shall live, lest he break forth like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.*

Good things are hardly beleaved, and slowly practised, and therefore the Prophet here renews his Exhortation of seeking God by true Repentance, and that he might the better prevail with them, he useth a double Motive.

The first is drawn from the danger which would ensue if they refused; the Wrath of God would break forth upon them like a consuming fire, so that all their superstitious Sacrifices at *Bethel* should not be able to quench it.

The second is drawn from the glorious and tremendous Majesty of God, with whom they had to doe; and this is accurately set forth, vers. 8, 9.

In this Verse we have a Repetition of the fore-going Exhortation to seek the Lord, that they might live, q. d. *If ever you desire to be truly happy, you must forsake your Idols, and false-worship, devoting your selves wholly unto God.*

2 Here is a Reason to enforce the duty, *Lest the Wrath of the Lord break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and devour it, and there be none to quench it in Bethel.*

Here the Holy Ghost seems to prevent an evasion, the *Israelites*



See M. Bunge's  
Spi. Refinings,  
1 P. Serm. 66.  
P. 403.  
Greenhills Ser.  
on Rev. 22. 17.  
P. 145.

Agnes, Pic-  
cepts for Pra-  
ctice, p. 41, 42.

ψ. 2. 12.

ψ. 90. 11

S

S

Hence it is that he sends his Ministers, rising early, and coming late unto them, exhorting them again and again to seek him, and turn to him, that they may live and not dye, See *vers. 4, 5, 6, 14, 15.*

2 Obf. *The Wrath of the Lord is exceeding terrible,* hence it is compared to fire, which is the most terrible, tormenting, and affrighting Element.

Quest. *But how is anger said to be in God, when he is impassible?*

Ans. Anger and Wrath are ascribed to God improperly, and Metaphorically, by an Anthropopathy; not as a perturbation, and trouble of mind, as it is in us; but as an act of revenging Justice, which Justice as it simply burns against sin, is called anger, but when it doth more fiercely wax hot against sin, and Sinners, it is called Wrath and Indignation, *Isa. 64. 5.*

1 Formidable.  
2 Durable.  
3 Inevitable.  
4 Irresistible.  
5 Unexpressible.

1 It is *formidable and terrible*; Fire of all Creatures is the most dreadful. Hence the doleful Torments of Hell are set forth by fire, *Mat. 3. 12.* and Gods Wrath is called, a *consuming fire*, *Deut. 4. 24.* which burns up all that stands in its way. This made him cast out Angels, hurl out Adam, drown the old world, fire *Sodom*, root out the *Canaanites*, *Lev. 18. 25.* and destroy *Jerusalem*. As all in God is infinite, his Mercy, Justice, &c. so is his Wrath, which makes it so exceeding terrible and intolerable. Should all the Creatures get to their help, yet they were not able to uphold a man under the burden of Gods wrath.

Hence the dearest of Gods Servants (though they have had Gods Spirit to uphold them) yet have cryed out of this, as a burden too heavey for them to bear; and have chosen rather to endure any tortures, than to lye under the wrath of an angry God. They fear not him who can but kill the body, but they say with the Prophet, *Psal. 76. 7. Thou, even thou art to be feared, and who may stand before thee when thou art angry?*

Gods

See D. Preston  
on Rom. 1. 18.  
P. 114. & C.

Gods wrath is like a great Bell, it is long in raising, but when it is up, it makes a hideous noyse. Or like Lead, which is cold of it self, but when once melted, nothing scalds more terribly. What calmer and smoother than the Sea, yet when stirred what more tempestuous?

2 It is *Durable*. It is not for a day or two, but it is an *abiding wrath*, Joh. 3.36. it is a fire that never goes out, but shall abide on the bodies and souls of the Reprobates to all eternity, *Math. 18.8.* and *25.41.*

3 It is *inevitable*, there is no flying from it, *Amos 9.1, 2.* If a King bee angry with us, we may flye out of his Dominions, but if the King of Kings bee against us there is no flying out of his Territories.

4 It is *irresistible*, it is like a violent wind, or a mighty flood; which carrieth down all before it, *Psal. 90.7, 8, 9.* Should all the world rise in opposition against God, they would bee no more before the fire of his wrath, than a little dry stubble, or a few crackling thorns. Wood is longer in burning, and leaves some coals behinde, but stubble and thorns are suddenly and utterly consumed, and scarce any ashes left, *Exod. 15.7.* *Isa. 5.24.* and *9.18.* and *47.14.* Fire and water have no mercy, there is no intreating them; such is Gods wrath in reference to the wicked, as good speak to the fire not to burn, or the water not to drown, as to the wrath of God not to consume wicked men, it must and will burn them, and none shall quench it, *Deut. 29.20.* Though *Moses* and *Samuel* stood before the Lord to intreat, yet the sentence cannot be reversed, wrath must devour and consume the wicked, *Jer. 15.1.* Though prayer hath in many cases quenched wrath, yet sometimes the wrath of God cannot bee quenched by prayer, nor intreated down, there is no speaking to it.

5 It is *unexpressible*. It is infinite, and so beyond the tongues expression, or the hearts imagination. Hence *Moses* asks, *Who knows the power of thy wrath?* *Psal. 90.11.* It surpasseth our knowledge. Wee may over-fear the wrath of men, but wee cannot have too dreadful apprehensions of the wrath of God. All other fire is but like painted or imaginary fire compared with this. Hence the Holy Ghost is faine to use metaphors and allusions to set it forth to us. Sometimes comparing it to *fire* which is a most furious element, laying all

See more in  
Mr. Leighs Bo-  
dy of Divinity,  
1.2.c.9. and Mr.  
Tentins on Jude  
7. Obs. 5.6.

waste before it, *Nahum* 1.5,6. Sometimes to water, and to a mighty flood which swiftly and irresistibly carries down all before it, *Job* 22.16, *Isa* 8.7. and 59.19.

Sometimes to a *Moth*, which secretly and insensibly eats thread by thread till the whole peece bee consumed, *Job* 13. ult. *Psal* 39.12. *Hos* 5.12. Sometimes to the Wrath of a King, and if that bee as the Messenger of death, Oh what is the wrath of the King of Kings? *Prov* 16.14.

1 Then take heed of provoking him to anger, better have all the world enraged against us, then God against us. Their wrath is but finite and limited, both in respect of time and place, but Gods wrath is infinite without either bank or bottom.

Take heed of all sin, especially of those God-provoking sins, as

1 *Idolatry*, *Deut* 4.23,24. and 32.21,22. 1 *Cor* 10.5,7. and following *Antichrist*, *Rev* 14.9,10. and 19.20.

2 *Profanation of holy things*, *Lev* 10.2. *Numb* 16.35.

3 *Neglecting to reform the things amiss in Gods worship*, *Ezra* 7.23.

4 *Fornication and Sodomitical sins*, *Gen* 19.24. 1 *Cor* 10.5,8.

5 *Murmuring at Gods dispensations*, 1 *Cor* 10.5,10.

6 *Apostacy and back sliding*, *Heb* 10.38.

2 When ever we perceive the fire of Gods wrath to break out in Sword, Plague, &c. by our prayers and tears we should labour suddenly to quench it, *Numb* 16.46. A fire the longer it burns, the more dreadful it is, and the harder it is to quench it.

3 In all our approaches to this great and mighty God, whether in Prayer, Sabbaths, Sacraments, &c. come with the greatest fear and reverence, for hee is a consuming fire, *Heb* 12.28. This holy fear must bee an ingredient into all our services, *Psal* 2.11. It is said of *Luther* that hee prayed with such fear and reverence, as remembering hee had to do with God, and yet with such assurance and confidence, as with a Friend, and Father.

4 Bee thankful for *Christ*, who hath delivered us from wrath to come. The Angels fell and lye under this wrath, but *Christ* was cursed that wee might bee blessed, and hath undergone Gods wrath for us, that wee might bee freed from it,

In

Tanta reverentia aliquid petit ut cum Deo; tanta fiducia ac spe ut cum patre & amico se loqui sentiat.  
Mel. Adams in vita Luth.

In time of temptation, set this as a skreen between the fire of Gods wrath, and thy soul. Hide thy self in the clefts of this Rock, and get thy soul covered with thy Saviours Righteousness, and then thou mayest stand with comfort and confidence before this consuming fire.

## VERSE 7.

*Ye who turn Judgement into wormwood, and leave off Righteousness in the earth.*

**T**He Prophet having called on *Israel* to repent, hee comes now to set before them their sins which they should repent of. Hee had called upon them before to forsake their Idolatry and sins against the first Table, vers. 5. now he calls on them to repent of their sins against the second Table, viz. their perverting of Judgement and Justice, their cruelty, and oppressing of the poor, verse 11. and their Bribery, verse 12.

*Seek ye the Lord, ye who have turned Judgement into wormwood.*

1 Here is a sin reprov'd, and that is perverting of Judgement, set forth by an elegant Metaphor and Allusion of turning Judgement into wormwood.

2 Here is an exegesis or fuller explication of this sin, *They leave off righteousness in the earth.* It is usual in Scripture to make the latter clause explain the former.

3 Here are the persons which are guilty of this sin, and those are the Princes, Judges, and Rulers of *Israel*, included in the Pronoun *Ye*.

4 Here is their duty set down in the next verse, They must turn from their sin, and seek the Lord who is the great Creator and Governour of all:

*q.d. O ye Rulers of Israel, who have not onely provoked mee by your Idolatry, but have also cast away all care of Righteousness and Equity, and given your selves up to all manner of cruelty, bribery, rapine, and iniquity, and have thereby turned the sweetest Justice into the bitterest wormwood; now repent, and seek the Lord, that ye may live for ever.*

The Prophet here principally taxeth the great ones, and the Rulers of the people, who had the deepest share in this guilt; they should have been patterns of Justice and Righteousness



to their inferiours; but they being evil themselves, corrupted the rest, as bad humours use to flow from the head to the body, and therefore the Prophet falls heavy upon them, as hee did before, Chap. 4. 1.

These corrupted Justice, and made that which is in it self most profitable and pleasant, to become bitter and distastefull by oppressing the poor and helpless. This is called *Wormwood* here, and gall and poyson, *Amos 6. 1. 2.*

1 Because such unrighteousness and oppression is very displeasing and bitter to God.

2 It is bitter to the poor and oppressed.

3 In the end it will bee bitter to the Oppressors themselves. This is *finis operis*, though not *finis operantis*. In the conclusion it will bee gall and wormwood, yea deadly poyson to their souls, though they intend it not.

Justice and Equity is a most sweet and precious thing, and doth wonderfully help to preserve the peace and prosperity of a Land. This is a sanctuary and shelter for the innocent and the oppressed; but these oppressing, self-seeking Rulers had made a poyson of a remedy, and turned that which was ordained for the safety of the afflicted, to his ruine. These Rulers had turned Justice into wormwood many ways,

1 By Bribery, *Amos 4. 1.*

2 By Partiality, justifying the wicked rich man, favouring the kinsman, the friend, the briber, but condemning the poor and innocent, who had no bribes to give them.

3 By delays tying out the poor, and so forcing him to give up his cause.

4 By wresting and perverting the Law to their own ends, contrary to the genuine sense of it.

5 By hindring such evidence as might clear the cause.

*And leave off righteousness in the earth.*

They let it lye in the dust, and trod it under foot. That which was their duty, yea their glory, viz. the execution of Justice, that they neglected and sleighted as a most contemptible thing. They abused the righteous, and did grinde the faces of the poor, *Amos 8. 4, 5, 6.* There was no place left for any righteousness amongst them; their seats of justice, were places of injustice; and their Courts of equity, Courts of iniquity.

See my Com.

on *Ps. 82. 4. p.*

*101, 113, 114,*

*&c. and p. 200,*

*201.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Perverting of Justice is very bitter, and displeasing to God and man.*

Look how distastful Gall and VVormwood is to us, so distastful is unrighteousness to the righteous God; It is as poyson and hemlock to him, *Amos. 6. 12.*

Hence he so oft complains of it, and denounceth so many woes against it, as in *Psal. 82. 2, 3.* and in *Isa. 5. 7.* See more in my *Com. on Psal. 82. 2. Obf. 5. p. 100. and Mr. Patrick's Jewish Hyp. ch. 9. p. 112.*  
*20, 23. & 10. 1. & 59. 4, 13.* and *Lam. 3. 35, 36.* As nothing is more sweet and delightful than an impartial administration of Justice, so nothing is more bitter and displeasing to God and man than unrighteousness. It is a sin to omit righteousness, but it is a farre greater aggravation of the sin to contemn it, and trample it under foot, as these did here. Great is the number of wicked men, and were it not for Justice that did restrain them, every mans lust would be a law, and the reins would be let loose to all manner of villany; so that it would be safer living amongst so many wilde Beasts, than amongst men. Justice is Rulers duty, security, and glory, as I have shewed at large on *Psal. 82. 4. p. 35, 36, 111, 139.*

## VERSE 8.

*Seek him that maketh the seven Starres and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night, that calleth for the waters of the Seas, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth, the Lord is his name.*

**T**His rustick plain Prophet begins here to raise his stile. The better to awaken these sensual and secure sinners, he sets before them the dreadful & glorious Majesty of that God with whom they had to doe, *q. d.* you have not to doe with a dead and impotent Idol, that will be pleased with dead and dull services, and pacified with childish toys and trifles; but you have to doe with the living and Omnipotent God, who is the Creator and Governour of all things, who appoints the vicissitudes

frudes of Day and Night, of Summer and Winter; who numbers the Starres of Heaven, and calls them all by their names; who waters the earth with rain, and strengthens the weak against the strong, and makes the spoyled victorious over the spoyler. It was the great study of the Prophets, and especially of this our Prophet, to set forth the Lord in his Majesty and Glory, that they might the better work upon their Hearers. See *Amos* 4. 13. & 6. 14. & 9. 6.

In this Verse we have a magnificent description of Gods Omnipotency, he is,

The Creator of the Starres,  
The Disposer of the Times,  
The Former of the Clouds, and  
The Orderer of VVarres;

And therefore the Prophet calls upon them yet once more, to seek this Great, Almighty one. This oft pressing of this duty notes the necessity, Excellency, and difficulty of it. It is not so easie a matter to repent as many imagine, the heart of man is exceeding hard, and his eares are stopt against Gods counsels, so that the Lord is forced to call again, and again, for audience and admittance.

*Seek yee him.*

These words are not in the Original, but are necessarily understood, and to be supplied from Vers. 4, 6.

*Who maketh the seven Starres, and Orion.*

The Prophet begins first with the Stars, because the Majesty, Power, and VVisdome of God is wonderfully seen in their motion, order, multitude, and magnitude. Under these two Constellations all the rest of the Starres are comprehended, by a Synecdoche of the part for the whole, for he that made one made all, and the least are ordered by him as well as the greatest. But because these two were most eminent and obvious, and commonly known, therefore he chiefly instanceth in these two; they are mentioned only three times in Scripture, viz. *Job* 9. 9. & 38. 31. and in the Text.

The Pleiades or seven Starres, and Orion, are opposite one to another.

1 They have contrary situations, Orion dwells in the East, and Pleiades in the West,

2 They

2 They appear in contrary seasons, *Pleiades* ariseth about *March*, and brings in the Spring, but *Orion* appears about *November*, and brings in Winter; so that when hee saith, *Seek the Lord who made Pleiades and Orion*, it is as if hee had said in plain English, *Seek him who makes Summer and Winter.*

3 They have different Influences:

1 *Pleiades* is a Constellation usually called the seven Stars; They arise in our Hemisphere about the Spring, and are therefore called *Vergilia, quasi veris vigiles*. Hence wee read in *Job 38.31.* of *Pleiadum delicia*, the sweet influences of the *Pleiades*, because they bring in the sweet and pleasant Spring with them; when they appear, the trees and plants begin to flourish. These *Pleiades* have their name from saying, because after the cold and stormy Winter is past, *Saylers* begin to put to Sea. These *Chimah* or seven Stars appear in a cluster about the midst of heaven, they are commonly known by *Shepherds* and *Rusticks*. *Amos* being an Herdsman had taken notice of them.

*Orion* is a Constellation of Stars that produceth cold, when it appears then Winter comes. It ariseth in our Hemisphere about *November*. As the *Pleiades* do loose the earth and set it at liberty that it may bring forth delightful fruit; so *Orion* by his frosty bands is said to binde up the earth, *Job 38.31.* and bring in variety and change of weather, with many storms and tempests: Hence the word *Chesil*, as it signifies a fool, and one who is unconstant, now of one minde, and anon of another; so this Star is called by this name by reason of the unconstancy and mutability of weather which it brings with it.

*Seek ye him who turns the shadow of death into the morning.*

These words are taken by some literally, and by others metaphorically, I shall take in both, though the literal bee most genuine; *q. d.* It is this great and mighty Lord who makes great changes in the Air, and wonderful alterations in States and Kingdomes. It is hee that turns the grossest darkness into the brightest day; and the lowest adversity into the highest prosperity; and on the contrary, hee can (when pleaseth him) turn our day into night, our light into darkness, and our mirth into mourning.

*Orion circa Novembrem exorians, caelum et terram variis tempestatibus turbat, Mercor.*

See more in Amos 8.9.

*Tſalmaver um-  
bra mortis, i. e.  
maxima &  
denſiſſima te-  
nebra, que ti-  
morem mortis  
iacutere poſſunt.*

By the shadow of death, here is meant great, groſs, horrible, and terrible darkness, ſuch as is the very image of death. Any darkness is ſad, but darkness, and the ſhadow of death is the height of ſadneſs. Such deadly darkneſs *Job* wiſherh to the day of his birth, *Job* 3. 4, 5. and *David* put the worſt of his caſe, and the beſt of his faith, when hee ſaid, *Though I walk in the valley of the ſhadow of death, I will fear none evil*, *Pſal.* 23. 4. that is, in the greateſt of evils, I will fear none evil. In the very danger of dangers, in exceeding great dangers, hee would comfort himſelf in his God. It may alſo ſignifie ſymbolically and metaphorically great dangers, and deep diſtreſs.

*And maketh the day dark with night.*

The vicſſitudes of day and night are not caſual, but providential. It is the Lord who is the great diſpoſer and diſpenſer of time, that by his Almighty power hath appointed the day to ſucceed the night, and the night the day, which no gods nor Idols can do.

*Who calleth for the waters of the Sea* [by vapours and clouds] *and powreth them out upon the face of the earth* [by ſhowers of rain.]

Hee calls for the waters of the Sea viz. beyond its ordinary bounds, that it may overflow the earth with inundations, ſo ſome.

But more genuinely thus, It is the Lord that appoints and orders the waters (as by expreſs command) to riſe up from the Seas, and turn into rain, which afterwards hee powres forth upon the earth. The Sun draws up vapours out of the Sea, which are condensed in the middle region of the air into rain, and then fall down upon the earth. Theſe waters which come ſalt and bitter from the Sea, and ſo in all probability ſhould make things barren, yet are ſo ſtrained and purified by the Almighty hand of God, that they become ſweet and fruitful.

*Queſt. But who is it that doth all theſe wonderful things?*

*Anſw.* Why it is Jehovah, *The Lord is his name*, hee is no dead Idol, as *Baalim* the god of the *Sidonians*, or *Moloch* the god of the *Ammonites*; but hee is Jehovah who hath his being in himſelf, and who gives life and breath and being to all creatures; from him, by him, and in him are all things, and there.

See more on  
*Amos* 9. 6.

*Eſt ipſum eſſe,  
ſuum ſuum for-  
male, tum cau-  
ſale rerum om-  
nium, qui eſt  
Oceanus eſſen-  
tis, & immen-  
ſum pelagus  
exiſtendi, à La-  
tide.*

therefore hee will not bee deluded with your superstitious fopperies.

The summe of all is this, *Seek ye him who hath formed and framed the heavens, and all the Stars therein, who turneth the blackest night into a clear morning, and causeth the brightest day to end in a dark night, who waters the earth with rain, the Lord is his name who doth this.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

I It is lawful for a Minister to press the same truths again and again upon his people. Thrice in this Chapter doth the Prophet call on Israel to seek the Lord. Thrice in one Psalm is Gods Almighty power repeated, that the Church might triumph in it, *Psal. 46. 1, 7, 11.* Christ presseth that Precept, *Hee that hath an ear to hear let him hear,* again and again, *Rev. 3. 11.* Paul oft put his hearers in minde of what hee had delivered to them, *Rom. 15. 14, 15.* So Peter put his hearers in remembrance of the same things, *2 Pet. 1. 12, 13.* *Yea so long as I live I will put you alwayes in remembrance.* This is profitable and safe for our people, *Phil. 3. 1.* *To write the same things to me is not grievous, but for you it is safe.* *Abundans cautela non nocet.* This is a means to help the memory, wee are naturally forgetful of the best things, and therefore had need to have line upon line, and precept upon precept, *Isa. 28. 10, 13.* especially fundamental, practical precepts, such as Faith, Repentance, Obedience, Death, Judgement, &c. should oft bee preft. When the *Gentiles* heard *Paul* preach Christ, they desired to hear the same things again the next Sabbath day, *Act. 13. 42.*

See Mr. Robins  
son on Ephes.  
6. 12. v. 34.

This helps to strengthen our graces, to quicken us to our duties; as the sounding of the Trumpet quickens the spirit of a valiant Souldier, and it confirms us in the truth of the things delivered; as the doubling of *Pharaohs* dreams assured him of the certainty of the thing.

*Cant.* Yet a Minister must not preach the same things out of idleness, spending all the week in an Alehouse, or in some secular affairs, and then come with a *crambe recolta*, some crude, idle, addle, undigested stuffe, Cursed are such as do this work of the Lord negligently. An idle Minister is the



worst man in a Parish, for whereas an idle Artificer hurts but his Family, an idle Minister hurts a whole Congregation.

But when wee repeat and inculcate things out of conscience, and for the good of our people, this is commendable. Besides, there is no Minister that is studious, but if hee do come to press the same point again, hee hath some new arguments or enlargements; for Divinity is such a depth, that wee are alwayes learning, and may finde out somewhat which wee knew not before.

Be not then offended when you hear necessary truths oft prest, this is safe for us, and good for you. Many have itching ears, they must have *novum, aut nihil*, they are all for novelty, they cannot endure wholesome, plain preaching; whereas wee have but two things to preach, *credenda & agenda*, faith and good works.

2 Obs. The names which are commonly given to Stars may be used by us.

*Chimah*, and *Kesil*, *Pleiades* and *Orion* were names given to those Stars by men, and yet the Holy Ghost useth them here, and speaks with the vulgar in their own language. So it useth Heathenish names in the New Testament, *Act. 28. 11.* we read of a Ship in which *Paul* sayled, called *Castor* and *Pollux*, two Pagan-sea-gods. So for dayes and months wee may call them by such names as are best known to the people with whom wee live. If wee live amongst a people that usually say the first, second, third month or day, wee must say so too. But if wee live in a land where they say *January*, *February*, *March*, &c. *Munday*, *Tuesday*, &c. wee must say so too, else how shall wee understand one another? Thus the Jews called their months sometimes by *Caldean* names, as *Nisan*, *Adar*, *Cisleu*, and *Tammuz*, from the Idolatrous feasts of *Tammuz*, which they celebrated yearly in the fourth month, *Ezek. 8. 14.* wee may as well say *Lammaz*, as the Jews say *Tammuz*.

It is true, *David* sayes, hee will not once make mention of Idol gods, *Psal. 16. 4.* but that was by way of adoration and reverence, or to swear by them, but in a civil respect to distinguish dayes, and to make known our mindes to those that wee speak to; thus the Prophets themselves have used them.

3 Obs.

3. *Obj.* The Lord is the maker of all Stars: *Job 38. 31.*

Hee that made these two Constellations, made all the rest, for under these two the rest are comprehended, *Job 9. 9.* It is hee, and hee onely that hath garnish'd the heavens with Sun, Moon, and Stars, *Job 26. 13.* Much of Gods Power and Wisdome is seen in the Stars of heaven, every flower of the field sets forth his praise, but these declare his glory in a more eminent manner, *Psal. 19. 1.* and therefore the Lord calls upon his people in the Text to seek and serve him, why so? for it is hee that made *Pleiades* and *Orion*, i.e. hee made all the glittering Stars; and if the floor of heaven bee so admirable, what is the inside?

*Stellæ sunt Lu-  
na famula; no-  
bis oculi, mi-  
litiæ caeli.*

Wee should therefore dayly admire and praise him, who hath made the Sun to rule the day, and the Moon and Stars to rule the night, for his mercy endures for ever, *Psal. 136.*  
78, 9.

Much of God  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Multitude,} \\ \text{Magnitude,} \\ \text{Motion, and} \\ \text{Influence} \end{array} \right\}$  of the Stars,  
is seen in the

1 For *Multitude*, they are for number numberless, none but God that made them can number them, *Psa. 147. 4.* He tells the number of the Stars, and calls them all by their names, hee knows them as exactly and particularly as we know those men, whom wee can presently upon sight call by their names. Men can reckon some, and count to about a thousand three hundred, but hee calls them all by their names.

2 Their *Magnitude*, such great bodies shew the greatness of that God which made them. Most men look upon the Stars as some small lights, like the blaze of a candle, but when it shall bee made appear by reason that one Star is bigger than the whole earth, it may well move admiration in us.

3 Their *swift and regular motion*, That these mighty bodies should bee carried about the world every day, and more exactly in order, not one of them out of course; though they have shone above five thousand years, yet still they continue their former vigour and brightness. The fixed Stars keep their own Orbs constantly; so should wee bee constant in Gods way,

way, and not bee like Planets or wandering Stars, carried to and fro with every wind of doctrine, *Jude 13.*

4 They have great Influence upon the creature, though not so great as judicial Astrologers would make the world believe.

4 Obs. *Rain is the gift of God.*

It is hee that calls for the waters of the Sea (by whose vapours the clouds and rain are made) and poureth them out upon the earth, *Job 5. 10.* But of this at large on *Amos 4. 7.* and *9. 6.*

5 Obs. *That second causes must lead us to the first cause of all.*

The Prophet here describing the Physical original of the rain, and shewing that the waters of the Sea were the material cause of it, and the Sun the instrumental cause to draw up those vapours, yet hee tells us that God is the efficient cause of all, it is hee that calls for the waters of the Sea, and unless hee move, the other can do nothing; *Nil si prima vetat, causa secunda valet.* Many talk of nature, and study nature so long till they forget the God of nature, and pore so much upon the creature, that they forget their Creator.

6 *The consideration of Gods Omnipotency should humble us.*

This is the reason why the Prophet so much insists on this point, *Amos 4. ult.* and *9. 6.*

#### VERSE 9.

*That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the Fortress.*

THE Prophet having set forth Gods Omnipotency in the works of Creation, comes now to clear it further by his works of Gubernation and Providence; hee can with ease strengthen the weak and destroy the strong; there is nothing too hard for him.

In this verse wee have a Prolepsis, or preventing of an objection, whereas the *Israelites* might say, Wee dwell in *Samarina*, a strong fortified City that hath stood it out many a time successfully against its enemies, wee have likewise a potent and successful King, *Jeroboam* the second, and therefore it is not for us to fear.

To this the Prophet answers, that they had no reason to trust in these creature-confidences, for the Lord could easily raise up the *Assyrian* who should spoil both them, and their Kingdome.

Object. *If hee do come, wee will flye to our strong Holds and Fortresses.*

Ans. And I will send the Destroyer (saith the Lord) against the Fortress. There is no power nor policy against the Lord, all Forts and Fortifications are but vain if hee be our enemy. God can send mighty Adversaries against us who shall destroy our Forts, and us in them.

In the words we have 1 A Position or Proposition. *God strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong.*

2 An Inference, *Therefore the spoiled shall come against the Fortress, and take it.* The vulgar Latine, and all the Popish gang, that leave the Original, and follow the Latine Translation, render it *subridet vastatorem*, God laughs at the destruction of wicked men. But the word signifies to corroborate and strengthen, and not to laugh or smile.

Others conceive, that the Lord here threatens that if they did not seek him, but would trust in their strength, and creature-confidences, and still went on to condemn his warnings, he would send some weak, spoiled, contemptible enemy, and strengthen him with the spoyle which hee should get, so that hee should destroy them, for hee gives victory to whom hee pleaseth, and can make the weak to prevail against the mighty; and therefore *Israel* ought to stand in awe of him, and sue unto him for mercy. This way the *Chaldee* Paraphrase goes.

But the Original favours the *Geneva* Translation, which runs thus, *Hee strengtheneth the destroyer against the mighty, and the destroyer shall come against the Fortress.*

The original word *Shod* which our Translation renders spoiled, is usually rendred a Destroyer, a Waster, a Spoyle, a Plunderer, *Isa. 16. 4.* Let mine out-casts dwell with thee *Moab*, be thou a covert to them from (*Shod*) the spoiler, for the Extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, and substantively it is put for devastation, waste, and spoyle, *Isa. 22. 4.* and *59. 7.* *Hos. 7. 13.* So that wee may take the words either generally, that the Lord is hee that strengtheneth the Destroyer against

*Hammablig, confortans, corroborans, frons Balag, roboravit, confortavit.*

*Qui vires auget infirmis contra fortes, & direptoribus super propugnacula fortissimorum imperium donat. Chald. Paraph.*

*Shod, vastator, devastator, rapina.*

Gn̄l gn̄az, su-  
per robuſſum  
fortem, valen-  
tem.

against the Mighty, when they sin against him, and provoke him.

Or particularly, as spoken to *Israel*, it is the Lord that strengthens the *Assyrian* (who is called the Spoyler by way of eminency) against these idolatrous *Israelites* who thought themselves strong and mighty.

And the Lord will bring him against the Fortress: that is, against the fortified City of *Samaria*, and the other Cities and Towns depending on it, *Iſa.* 17. 3.

q.d. You think yourselves safe and well, because you are armed and fortified, and therefore you sleight my Threatnings, and promise yourselves peace, and think that none shall bring you down, not once considering that you have to do with God, and not with man, who can strengthen the weak against the strong, and hath many Destroyers at hand ready to execute his vengeance upon a rebellious people.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 If we take the words according to our Translation, the Observation is, That God can strengthen the weak, and make them overcome the strong. It is hee that strengthens one, and enfeebles another, *Ezek.* 30. 24. and can make wounded men to subdue his enemies, *Jer.* 37. 10. He can make one *Abraham* with his family to conquer four Kings, *Gen.* 14. 9. 18. he can make a *Joshua* to slay *Amalakites*, destroy *Midianites*, and subdue *Canaanites*, *Num.* 31. 7. We should not then kiss our own hands, or sacrifice to our own nets, but ascribe the praise of all our victories to the Lord, who strengthens the wasted and the spoyled against the spoyler, and can make *Jacob* a worm to thresh mighty Mountains, *Iſa.* 41. 14, 15. so *Josh.* 6. 5, 15. 1 *Cor.* 2. 27. *Jer.* 31. 22.

2 No Forts, nor Fortifications can preserve a sinful people from destruction.

Though they should build walls as high as heaven, and dig ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin bee within, all Fortifications without are vain; as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
*Hof.* 13. 16.  
*Oof.* 7. p. 71.

## VERSE 10.

*They hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and they abhor him that speaketh uprightly.*

**T**Here are two great impediments that keep men from Repentance. The one is a low conceit of God; The other is an high conceit of themselves. The first the Prophet removed Verse 8.9. by setting before them the glorious Majesty of God. The second hee comes to remove in this and the following verses, by setting before them their sin and misery, that so (if possible) hee might fit them for mercy.

In this Verse wee have a second sin and cause of *Israels* ruine, and that is obstinacy and hating of reproof. This was their sinning sin which helpt to ruine them with a witness; the Lord in great mercy sent Physicians to them, but they abused them, and like frantick Patients threw the physick to the walls, they hated to bee reformed, and cast Gods words behinde them.

The words admit of some difficulty. The question is, *Of whom doth the Prophet here complain, whether of the Rulers, or of the people?*

*Ans.* Of both. 1 Of the people, *They hate him that reproveth in the gate*; that is, they hate the Judges who executed judgement in the gate; they hate him who thus censurcth and judgeth them for their sin; for there is a double reproof, 1 *A civil reproof* given by the Magistrate, his just sentence upon the wicked is a real reproof of his wickedness, and that Magistrate which faithfully and impartially thus reproves men in the gate, must look to bee hated by the wicked of the world, so was *Job* that renowned Magistrate, *Job* 30.1, 10.

2 And most genuinely, it is taken for *spiritual reproof*, by the Prophets who were wont to reprove open sins openly: *They hate him that reproveth in the gate*, that is, in the publick and open Assemblies; for the gates of the City were places where usually was much concourse of people, *Prov.* 1.21. and 8.3. There the Judges kept their Courts of Judicature, and erected their seats of Judgement for the administration of Justice, and determining of causes, as appeareth, *Gen.*



34. 30. *Deut.* 21. 19. and 22. 15. *Ruth* 4. 1. *Job* 5. 4. and 29. 7. *Psal.* 127. *mt.* They had Justice in the gates.

1 For the ease and convenience of the Citizens, that they might follow their suits without impediment to their other affairs.

2 That Country-men might have justice easily and freely before they entered the City.

3 That the Judges might take heed of doing unjustly, since they had so many to see and hear what they did.

4 To shew the equality and indifferency of Justice from which none were excluded, but as the gates of the City were open to all, to go in and out at pleasure, so should the Courts of Justice.

5 To intimate that the chiefest strength of Cities, and safety of States doth consist in the due execution of Justice, which is as gates and bars against sin and wickedness. Take away this, and gates of brass cannot preserve a City from destruction.

Here sometimes the Prophets did preach Gods word, and publish their Prophecies to the people, either in the gates of the Temple, as *Jer.* 7. 2. or in the Gates of the City, as *Jer.* 17. 19, 20. and 19. 2. and 22. 2. and 26. 10.

2 Here is an Aggravation of their sin. *They abhor him that speaketh uprightly*, or that speaketh what is sincere and right; that is in plain English, they abominate that man, and abhor that Minister that faithfully declares the counsel of God unto them without halting or halving, and this is made a Periphrasis of a faithful Minister, hee is one that doth not blend, nor mix the word of God, but hee delivers his will plainly and sincerely to his people. They hated the Judge, but they abhorred the Minister; now abhorrency is the height of hatred.

*Integrum abominantur verbum.*

*Senes & iudices loco Dei positos, ad iudicandum sedentes, oderant, non ferentes eorum correptiones. Pari infamia perfectè loquentem, i. e. veros Prophetas qui solum & perfectissimum Dei sermone annuntiabant. Mercer.*

The people could not bear the censures of their Rulers, but neither Princes nor people could indure the plain and powerful reproofs of the Prophets; and therefore the Prophet here chargeth the Judges, and the great ones more especially (as appears by the context, verse 7. 11, 12, 15.) for ha-

ting

ting the Prophets which reproved them in the gates. These great ones had acted their unjustice openly in the gate, and for any one to bee so bold as to come there and reprove their unrighteousness, they could nor bear it.

*corruptionis argumentum, quando illis la-  
ci correctio nulla admittitur, ubi disciplina publica maxime regare debet. Gualter.*

Great men love to live as they list, they love not bands of restraint, they must do what please themselves with a non-*obstante*, without controule. Though they do unjustly, yet none must tell them of it, for they have eyes, but they neither can nor will see, they have ears, but they will nor hear, for their hearts are hardened to their own destruction, *Isa. 6. 9, 10.*

*Videmus, & reges, & quicunque in mundo potestate aliqua pradii sunt, velint esse sacro-sancti, nec ullam admittant reprehensionem. Calvin.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

## 1 Open sinners must bee openly reprov'd.

Those that sin before all, must bee reprov'd before all, that others may fear, *1 Tim. 5. 20.* These Judges who acted unrighteously in the gate, must bee reprov'd by the Prophets in the gate.

See my Com.  
on 2 Tim. 4. 10.  
p. 411.

2 Obl. It is a sad aggravation of mens sins to hate those, whom God hath authorised and commissioned to reprove them for their sins. To lay snares for him that reproveth in the gates, *Isa. 29. 21.* To devise devices against plain-dealing *Jeremies*, and with *Ahab* to hate Gods faithful *Micaiahs*, and to seek their death and destruction, who labour to bring us to life and salvation, is the height of wickedness, *Gen. 19. 9. 1 King. 22. 24, 26. Jer. 38. 6. Matth. 14. 3. Act. 7. 54. and 9. 29.*

1 K. 22. 8

Truth breeds hatred, and light is irksome to the sore eyes of wicked men. They draw the Curtains, and cannot endure the light that reproves them; and it is worth observing, that the viler men have been, the more they have hated plain reproofes, as the *Sodomites*, *Pharaoh*, *Ahab*, *Herod*, &c. they were all reprehension-proof. But the better men have been, the more submissive to reproofes, as *David*, when *Abigail* stopt him on one hand, and *Nathan* on the other, hee blesther the one, and loves the other. So *Hezekiah* when the Prophet *Isaiah* told him that hee must lose all, hee receives it meekly, with a Good is the word of the Lord which thou hast spoken, *Ila.*

*Amant lucem splendens, non redarguentem.*

39 ult. So *Constantine* and *Theodosius*; how tractable and submissive were they to the Ministers of Christ, when the *Roman Cæsars* (most of them) persecuted to the death such as opposed them in their Tyrannical practices, they were punished as seditious and troubleers of the State, that did in the least trouble them for their sins.

See *Hildersham*  
on *Psal. 51.*  
*Lect. 9. p. 52.*  
&c.

And this is the great sin of *England*, and bodes some judgement approaching, that we cannot endure a plain-sound-soul-searching-Ministry: wee must have smoothe things, or nothing, *Isa. 30. 10.* The Idolater must not be told of his Idols, the superstitious man of his ceremoniousness, nor the incontinent man of his *Herodias*, &c. Men love such as will daub over their vices, and give them such service or starvis as will not bite them, *Miss a non mordet.* It is observed that the *French Reformed Churches* some years before that bloody massacre, did affect a frothy, flashy kinde of preaching, not regarding that which touched the conscience. Whether this be not our case, let the Reader judge.

#### VERSE II.

*Forasmuch therefore as your treading is upon the poor, and yee take from him burdens of wheat, yee have built houses of hewn stone, but yee shall not dwell in them, yee have planted pleasant Vineyards, but yee shall not drink of them.*

**W**Ee are now come to a third sin, for which the Prophet reproves this people, and that is for *Oppressing the poor*, and this was more peculiarly the sin of their Rulers and Grantees. They that should have been the keepers of the Law, they were the greatest breakers of it; they that should have been the Vindicators, they were the Violators of it. The Prophet therefore strikes not at the foot, viz. the common-people; but he strikes at the head, from whence all disorder descended unto the body.

In this Verse we have {  
1 Their Sin,  
2 Their Punishment.

1 Their

1 Their sin was Oppression, } 1 They trod upon the poor,  
which appeared by two cruel acts } 2 They took away his corn.

2 In the Punishment } 1 Their Projects,  
we have, } 2 The frustration of those Projects.

Their Projects were } 1 Building of fine houses,  
} 2 Planting of Vineyards.

Their frustra- } 1 They shall not dwell in the one,  
tion follows, } 2 They shall not drink of the other.

*Thou treadest is upon the poor*; that is, upon the afflicted, and godly poor especially, *Amos 2.7, 8.* where the hedge is lowest, there these beasts get over. *Amos 4.1.* These they tread upon in a most contemptible manner, as the dirt and mire in the streets; grinding them with cruel impositions, and oppressing them with grievous vexations, keeping them under in extream slavery, and laying them as low as the dust; now to lye in the dust implies a very low, base, and despicable condition, *1 King. 16.2. Job 16.15.*

The word in the Original signifies properly to despise or trample under feet by way of contempt, *Isa. 14.25.* and *18.2.* and *63.18.* But *Ad metaphoricallly* it signifies to oppress and vilifie.

*Ye take from him burdens of Wheat*: that is (say some) you extort such great bribes, and lay such great burdens on them, that they are forced to sell their necessary food to feed you with money.

*Bosces, deducitur vel à Rad. Bosc. i. e. pudes facere, vel potius à Bos, i. e. conculus: apudibus: cui vicinum est Bar, in oliare, praedavi, diripere.*

Others refer it to the great men, who lent the poor money till their harvest came in, and then were so rigid and severe in exacting their debts, that they made them bring their very corn which should support their Families for payment.

Others refer it to the cruel Usurers, who were not content with money for their money, but they must have corn too, which after they sold at dear rates to the poor, *Amos 8.4, 5.*

But what ever Oppression it was specifically, yet in general the Prophet reproves it as a crying sin, that they dealt so harshly and cruelly with the poor, as first to rob them of their money, and then by force or fraud to make them bring and bear upon their own shoulders that little which they had left to sustain themselves, and their families. To take away mens goods and cattel is sad, but to take away their corn, which is the

the staffe and stay of their household, and to make them carry it themselves, and become their own executioners, in carrying away the livelihood of their Families, is such a crying sin, that the Lord swears that hee will bear no longer with such Cannibals that devour the poor alive, *Amos 4.1, 2.*

*Domus excisionis, i.e. excisi & dolati lapidis, Mercer.*

Wee have seen their Sin, now follows the Punishment, *They shall build houses of hewn stone, but shall not dwell in them.* Ordinary houses will not content these Earth-worms, they must have curious Palaces built with hewn, squared, polished stones, that they might bee beautiful, firm and durable.

This was their project, by rape and rapine, by bribery and extortion, they built fine houses, *But they shall not dwell in them.* This *But* spoils all, either they shall go into Captivity, or be cut off by untimely death, as the rich fool, *Luke 12.20.* or their houses shall be burnt, or else their enemies shall possess them, according to that threatening, *Deut. 28.30, 39. Thou shalt build a house and not dwell in it, thou shalt plant a Vineyard and not eat the grapes thereof.* But who then shall enjoy them? why thine enemy. As thou shalt betroth a wife, and thine enemy shall lye with her, so the like misery shall attend thee in thy building and planting. It is misery enough to have these things taken away by enemies, but it is a great aggravation of this misery, when after we have taken much pains to get them, and have set our hearts upon them, and are filled with hopes and expectations of enjoying the fruit of our labours, then on a sudden to have them all snatched from us, and so our hopes to be frustrated, and others to enjoy our labours, this is bitter.

Or if they should escape these miseries, yet the Lord can smite them with sickness, so that they shall not enjoy what they Idolized; or else they have a prodigal heir, or some other vexation befalls them; so that *in the very fullness of their sufficiency they shall bee in straits,* *Job 20.22.* *Jer. 17.11.*

2 *They should plant pleasant Vineyards, but not drink the wine of them.* Great was their care and cost to build houses and plant Vineyards (under these two synecdochically are comprehended all other creature-delights) but they were deceived in their hopes, for they should neither enjoy the one, nor the other; and we see by daily experience, how these transitory things are tossed like a foot-ball from one to another;

ther; now one man hath it on his Toe, and anon another, at last comes one and trips up his heels, and gets it from them both, and at last comes death and strips them of all.

Ordinary dwellings and plain Vineyards content not these men, they must have the choysiest stone buildings, and the most exquisite and desirable Vineyards, so much the Original imports, *Vineyards of desire*, i. e. most desirable and delicate Vineyards. The Hebrews have no superlative degree, and therefore they use to express it by putting the Substantive in the Genitive Case; see *Dan. 9. 23.* he is called *Ish Chemed*, i. e. *desideratissimus*, *præstantissimus*, *elefantissimus*. So a pleasant Land is called, *a Land of desires*, i. e. a most desirable Land, *Jer. 3. 19.* See more in my Com. on *Hof. 13. 15. p. 45.*

Yet their sin deprived them of all these temporal delights, the Lord did retaliate them in their owne kind, as they had spoiled the poor, and taken all from them, so now the *Assyrian* should come and cast them out of all.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Oppression and trampling upon the poor is a crying sin.*

It will not let the Lord rest till he bring Judgements upon the heads of the oppressors, *Psal. 109. 16. Ezek. 16. 49. Joel 3. 19. Amos 3. 1.* See more in my Com. on *Hof. 13. 16. p. 106.*

2 *Obs. Worldly men lavish all upon self.*

These should have honoured the Lord with their riches, and spent them in works of Piety and pity to the poor; but they spent them in building sumptuous houses, and pleasant Vineyards; all of the best save the best religion; they Idolized the Creature, and loved it above the Creator, this ruined them. Like Swine they fed upon the mast, but forgot the donor.

3 *Obs. Luxury breeds cruelty.*

When ordinary building cannot content, nor necessities, please, but they must have all of the finest; then follows trampling upon the poor, wracking of rents, and inventing all base means for money. Such great sins seldom go alone, but like great men they have many attendants, *Amos 2. 7, 8.*

4 *Sin and punishment are inseparable.*

B b

They



They are both yoked together in this verse. But of this oft before.

5 *Sin blasts mens labours and expositions.*

In my Com. Vineyards, but disobedience blasts all. *Dent.* 28. 30. *Micah* on *Hof.* 13. 15. 6. 15. *Zeph.* 1. 13. As piety brings plenty, *Isa.* 65. 21. so sin robs us of all our pleasant things. But of this at large elsewhere.

6 *God oft retaliates men, and pays them in their own kind.*

God will spoyle those that spoyle his people, *Isa.* 33. 1. *Hab.* 2. 8. *Wee unto thee that spoylest, and wast not spoiled; and dealt treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee; when thou shalt cease to spoyle, then shalt thou be spoiled.* He speaks here of the cruel *Assyrian*, who spoiled Gods people causelessly, and unprovoked; and dealt treacherously with those that offered no such measure unto him. God will retaliate such in their owne kind, and when they have done spoyleing others, God will raise up the *Chaldeans* who shall spoyle them. God usually raiseth up some to deal hardly with those that deal hardly with his people. These Rulers here trod upon the poor, and now the Lord raiseth up the *Assyrian* to trample on them. They built their houses upon the bones and ruines of the poor, and now they lose them. So true is that, *Job* 20. 23. *The hand of the wicked shall be upon him, viz. to oppress and spoyle him who had spoiled others before.* But of Retaliation see more on *Amos* 6. ult.

#### VERSE 13.

*For I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins, they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.*

**I**N this Verse we have a Reason why the Lord would bear no longer with this people, viz. because of their obstinacy, cruelty, bribery, and unrighteousness, and because the high and lofty ones of the world are apt to contemn the poor plain Prophets of the Lord, and to slight their Message, and say to Gods *Amoses*, you wrong us, for we are not the men that you take us for, therefore the Prophet brings in the Lord himself, saying,

I know your manifold transgressions, and your mighty sins. q. d. Though you act your wickedness never so secretly, and hide your oppressions, and palliate and put glosses on your unrighteous practises before men; yet nothing is hid from mine eye. I understand your thoughts afar off, and know them before you think them, your words before you speak them, and your works before you do them, *Psal.* 139. 1, 2, 3, 4. So that however you may deceive men with your pretences of Law and Equity, yea and deceive your selves too, yet you cannot deceive me, for all things are naked to mine eye.

The Prophet having to doe with stubborn Sinners, to make the threatening the more ponderous and effectual, he brings in the Lord himself, saying, I know your wayes, and your wickedness, you think your selves Lords Paramount, and none may question you, or say unto you, what doe you? But you must know that there is a Lord above you, and a greater than you, to whom you must certainly and suddenly give an account.

The Prophet sets down the Sins of these great ones especially.

1 Generally, and in the lump.

- { 1 They were for Number, *Rabbim*, many.
- { 2 For Nature, *Gnatzumim*, great and grievous.

Their sins were not secret infirmities, but great and crying enormities, so hideous that they were no longer to be endured or born, and therefore the Holy Ghost multiplies words, the better to work upon them. They were guilty of *Transgressions*, *manifest transgressions*; *Sins*, and *mighty sins*. The word which we render Transgression, signifies a proud transgressing of Gods Law, and a malicious rebelling against God, *Psal.* 5. 10.

*Pesh-guechem, 2*  
*Pashang, tr. inf-*  
*gressio, prava-*  
*ricat, o rebellio.*  
*Gnatzum, for-*  
*tis, potens, nu-*  
*merosus.*  
*Peccata fortia*  
*i. e. graviora,*  
*graviora, cinde-*  
*la, obstinata.*  
*V. Schools-*  
*Guard, Rule 25*

The word *Gnatzumim* signifies both mighty in strength, and many in number. Such were the sins of this people, they were for number numberless, and for nature, grand and grievous: habitual, chronical sins. They were such as admitted of all manner of aggravations. 1 They were *multitudes*, they were three transgressions, and four, oft so called, *Amos* 2. 4. 6. i. e. they were exceeding many and manifold, for so the number seven is oft used in Scripture for many, as *Levit.* 26. 24.

**Ecclef. 11. 3.** they abounded with Idolatry, Oppression, Injustice, Security, &c. 2 All these were acted in a time when God was pouring Mercies upon them, saving them by the hand of *Jeroboam* the second, and giving them Victory over their enemies, 2 *King. 14. 25, 27.* now these are called *strong Sins*, either because they cried strongly for punishment, and did as it were bind Gods hands that he could shew them no mercy; or rather because they were committed with a stiff and stubborn mind *strongly* bent upon sin and wickedness, drawing on inquiry with the cords of vanity, and sin as it were with Cart-ropes, *Isa. 5. 18.* they were wilfully set on sin, and did use all means to draw it to themselves.

2 He sets down their sins particularly, specifically, and as it were by retail.

- 1 They afflict the just.
- 2 They take bribes.
- 3 They oppress the poor.

*Hostes iusti, vel  
affligentes ius-  
tum. Vatabl.*

1 *They afflict the just*, whom they should have defended. This Sin was written in Capital Letters, as it were on their fore-heads, and therefore they are so oft charged with it. The word *Tsorer* signifies to bind one hard together as we doe an enemy, and to traiten, vexe, oppress, and afflict one. So *Psal. 119. 14. Many are they that afflict me from my youth. God hath cut their cords.*

2 *They take a bribe*, viz. to pervert Justice, contrary to Gods express command. *Exo. 23. 8. Deut. 16. 17.* and it is made the badge of a wicked man to doe so, *Prov. 17. 23.* they condemned the poor innocent man that could not bribe, and absolved the wicked rich man that could bribe well. Thus they justified the wicked, and condemned the just, both which are an abomination to the Lord, *Prov. 17. 15.*

*εσφαις, λύ-  
τρον, vel re-  
demtionis pre-  
tium.*

The word which we translate a Bribe, signifies a Ransome; these mercenary Judges put Malefactors to ransom themselves with money, and to pay a rate for their redemption. *E. G.* If one had killed a man, it was but paying a Ransome (though the Law say, no Ransome shall be accepted for such a sin, *Numb. 35. 31.*) and he was quit. So if any were accused for Theft, Adultery, Witch-craft, &c. it was but bribing lustily, and they were presently acquit, and pronounced innocent; thus instead

instead of punishing them with death for their sins, they only fined and merced them.

*They turn aside the poor in the gate from their right.*

The Judges sate in the gate to do Justice (as I have shewed before, verf. 10.) yet even there they perverted Justice. *They oppress the poor in the gate, i.e. in the publick judgement* which was exercised in the gate. In open Court they perverted the cause of the poor, either by a corrupt stating of the case, or concealing the merit of the cause, or by delays, &c. The good man trusting to the equity of his cause, is cast, and for want of a bribe (which the rich man brings) is non-suited. Thus their fountains did run poyson, their Courts of Justice were Courts of Injustice; and their Courts of Equity, courts of Iniquity; and therefore the Lord is now resolved to bear no longer with them, but even to destroy them.

*In porta i.e. in publico iudicio. Met. subj.*

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Hardned, incorrigible sinners are not worthy of a reproof:* And therefore the Lord here turns his speech from these Rulers, and complains to himself and to his people, saying, *They afflict the just, take bribes, &c.* We do but wash a Blackmore, and labour in vain, when we speak to such posts and stones, as I have shewed elsewhere.

*In my Com. on Psal. 82. 5. Obs. I. p. 130.*

2 *Obs. All the wayes and works of men are under the inspection of an All-seeing God.*

All things are naked and anatomized before the eyes of him with whom we have to do, *Psal. 94. 9, 10. Heb. 4. 13.* Hee knows not only an action or two, but hee knows all the wayes that men take, *Job 23. 10.* Men may deceive others, and themselves too, but they cannot deceive God; he sees through their projects, and sayes to them as the Prophet said to the wife of *Jeroboam*, *Come in thou wife of Jeroboam, why faintest thou thyself to be another than thou art?* The secret plottings and contrivements of mens hearts are not hid from him, *Psal. on Job. 4. 16. 94. 11. Ezek. 11. 5.* The great ones of the world may veil their villanies, and hide them from the eyes of men, and escape their hands; but there is a greater than they whose eyes behold all their doings, and whose hand will bring them unto justice. All their pomp shall shortly lye in the dust, and they stand stript and naked before Gods dreadful Tribunal.

*See Hildersham Lect. 14 p. 64. Dyle on Job. 2. 24. p. 84.*

*Ne pecces, Deus ipse videt, bonus Angelus astat, accusat Satanas, conscientia mens cruciat.*  
See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4.3. Obf. 1.

We should therefore all of us lead a life worthy of such a presence, and take heed of provoking him by our sins, who cannot look upon them but with a vindictive eye, and one look of his eye puts all into terrour if hee but look on the earth (which never sinned against him) it trembles, *Psal. 104.*

32. I have read of some, that have had such lively, sparkling eyes, that they have affrighted such as beheld them, but what are their eyes compared with Gods?

3 Obf. *Wicked men by long continuance in sin come at last to be high and mighty sinners.*

As in goodness the repetition of the act intends the habit, and the sons of Sion go on in Gods wayes to perfection, *Philip. 3. 13, 14. Heb. 6. 1.* So the sons of Belial conceive sin, travel with it, and then bring it to perfection, *James 1. 15.* As men when they come to their full growth, are strong, and men of might; so when sinners are come to their full growth, they become great and mighty sinners, as we see, *Eccles. 8. 11. Jer. 3. 5. and 44. 16, 17. Hos. 2. 5.* They set their hearts upon sin, their greediness after it, shews the strength of their affection to it, *Eph. 4. 19.*

See my Com. on *Hos. 13. 16.* p. 109. &c.

*Fortes & strenui sunt non contra hostes, sed ad exbauriendos calices; gigantes non ad bellandum, sed ad potandum & peccandum.*

This bodes some judgement approaching, when mens sins are for number many, and for nature hainous and habitual. As there is a woe hangs over the heads of *such as are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to poure down strong drink,* *IIa. 5. 21.* So judgements are prepared for all obdurate, mighty sinners, *Deut. 29. 19, 20.* It is said of Nimrod that he was a mighty Hunter, *Gen. 10. 9.* so wee may say of too many, they are mighty Oppressors, mighty Worldlings, mighty Epicures, &c. and therefore we must look for mighty miseries. *Ingentia beneficia, ingentia vitia, ingentia supplicia.* As it is the glory of a man to be much and mighty in the service of God, *Luke 24. 19. Act. 7. 23.* So it is mens great debasement, when they are much and mighty in the service of sin and Satan, *Jer. 8. 2. Micah 7. 3.*

4 Obf. *Bribery is base.*

See more in my Com. on *Psal. 82. Index* Bribery, and on *Amos 4. 1.* Cartwright on *Psal. 15. ult.*

It blinds the eyes, perverts judgement, condemns the innocent, acquits the nocent, and brings confusion and disorder into a land. These wicked men acted their sins in all the six Cases, but would confess them in no case. They acted in the Nominative case by seeking a name to themselves. In the

Ge-

Genitive by fornication both spiritual and corporal, *Amos 2. 7, 8.* In the Dative by Bribery. In the Accusative by detraacting and slandering of the righteous. In the Vocative by flattering, and in the Ablative by robbing.

3 O'f. *Pervverting of justice to the oppressing of the poor, is a Land-destroying sin.*

That which brought *Israel* and *Judah* into Captivity, was more especially their sins of Injustice and Cruelty, as is fully proved by a learned Pen.

Mr. Patrick in his Jewish Hypocrites, ch. 90. &c.  
See my Com. on Psal. 81. 13.  
3:4 P. 100 &c.

## VERSE 13.

*Therefore the prudent shall keep silence in that time, for it is an evil time.*

**T**He Prophet goes on to shew the sad and deplorable condition of this obstinate people, whom neither God nor man could work upon. The Lord tells them in the precedent verse, that he knew all their works; and the Prophets told them of judgements coming upon them for those wicked works; but they misused the Prophets of the Lord, and hated him that reproved them in the gate; and were so resolutely set upon sin, that the Prudent resolved to bestow no more counsel in vain upon them.

In the words we have 1 The property of the Pious, they are prudent, wise, intelligent men. True beleevvers, and such as fear God, are the truly wise men of the world. They do nothing rashly and inconsiderately; but do all with good advice. They wisely compare things together, they observe the mysterious wayes of providence, and so become men of much sagacity, and can guess at the consequences of affairs. These are called prudent men, 1 *Sam.* 16. 18. *Prov.* 13. 16. and 16. 31. *Isa.* 3. 3. They fore-cast, and consider what is to be done and spoken, how, when, where. As his words are spoken *(super raris suis, Beophnan)* *Prov.* 25. 11. in season, with a due concurrence of all circumstances, so his works are done in due season, fitly and successfully.

The Original word signifies a cautious, circumspect, prudent understanding man: hence they are oft called wise men, intelligent men; and men of good understanding by a Me-



*Hammaschil, ille* Metonymy of the effect, because Prudence is a fruit of wisdom. 2 It signifies an *Instructor and Teacher*, who gives instruction, and makes others to understand; hence many of the Psalms are intitled, *Maschil le David*, i. e. a Psalm of David, teaching and giving Doctrinal instruction. 3 Sometimes by a Metonymy of the effect. it is put for prosperity and happiness, because they usually attend upon Prudence. So 1 Sam. 18. 30. Isa. 52. 13.

Prudence is three-fold.  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1 \text{ Carnal.} \\ 2 \text{ Ethical and Moral.} \\ 3 \text{ Theological.} \end{array} \right.$

1 There is a *Carnal Wisdom* and Prudence, when men are wise only for themselves, seeking their owne ends, ease, and advancement, *Luke 16. 8.* this is so farre from wisdom, that it is called and counted folly in Gods Dictionary, *Luke 12. 20.* 1 Cor. 1. 19. & 3. 19.

2 There is a *Moral Prudence*, which is found in the civil wise men of the world, *Isa. 29. 14. & 49. 7* *Matth. 11. 25.* *Acts 13. 7.*

See more in  
Dr. Burger his  
Ser. on Amos 5.  
33. p. 3, 4. print-  
ed. 1660.

3 There is a *Theological* and Divine wisdom, which is conversant about Divine and Spiritual things, and in this sense the faithful and regenerate are called Wise and Prudent, *Deut. 4. 6.* *Matth. 7. 24.* and 25. 2.

See Ward on  
Mat. 11. 25. p.  
91. ubi plura.

Some Criticks make Wisdom to be the speculative part, and Prudence the practical; Wisdom to be infused, and Prudence acquired. But these are so involved one in another, that one cannot be without the other; and therefore we finde them oft confounded in Scripture, and used promiscuously one for another.

2 Here is the effect of their prudence, *They shall keep silence.*

3 Here is the time when they shall keep silence, it is *In that time, viz.* in that time of *Israels* obstinacy, and in that time when God shall punish them for their obstinacy, and give them up into the hand of the *Assyrian* for a prey, for he speaks not of present, but future evils, and therefore it is not in *hoc*, but in *isto tempore*, it is not in this, but in that time.

4 Here is the reason of their silence, and that is, because it is an evil time; both in respect of the evil of sin, and of the

the evil of suffering. 1. They were evil times in respect of the evil of sin, All manner of sin in all manner of persons abounded both in City and Country. Sin was come to that height amongst them that it was dangerous to speak truth unto them; yea they silenced the true Prophets, and commanded the Amos to bee gone, and molested them no more with his preaching. They hated reproof, they afflicted the just, and oppressed the poor, therefore the Prudent shall keep silence.

*Rang, denotat  
malum culpa,  
& malum pe-  
na.*

2 The times were evil in respect of the evil of Punishment; for where the evil of sin goes before, the evil of punishment alwayes follows. The Sword, Plague, Famine, should all pursue them, and if they escaped one of those evils, yet another should arrest them, *vers. 19.* In both these respects times are called evil in Scripture, *Jer. 18. 11. Ephes. 5. 16. 2 Tim.*

3. 1. though the latter seems here to some to be the most genuine, it is a time of evil, viz. of punishment, of great misery and desolation, so the word is oft used for the evil of punishment, *Psal. 37. 19. Jer. 15. 11. Micah 2. 3.* therefore the prudent shall be silent before the Lord, and not once murmur against his just dispensations.

*Tempore in illo,  
i. e. tempore  
penae, qua mo-  
do fuit denun-  
tiata. vers. 11.  
Piscat.*

3 Others but not so properly, make the words to be a commendation of a punishment, *q. d.* Since you will not hearken to the counsel of my Prophets, but shut your eyes against the light, hating to be reformed, and abhorring such as speak truth unto you, *vers. 10.* therefore I will punish you with the silence of the true Prophets, *Ezek. 3. 26.* and other pious men; they shall bestow no more counsel in vaine upon you, since you are snarling Dogs, my holy things shall not be given to you, *Mar. 7. 6.* but I will leave you to Sycophants and Flatterers, that shall daub over your sins, and lead you blind-fold to destruction. They could not endure sound Doctrine, and therefore they should be fed with lies, for that pleased them best. There is hope of good when good men speak, their lips will disperse knowledge, *Prov. 15. 7.* but when a people shall delight in noue but fools and flatterers, their ruine is not far off.

4 Others thus; their enemies shall be so Tyrannical and  
*Pauper si pru-  
dens, eliger po-  
tius, dum fraus & potentia dominantur in iudiciis, pecuniam amittere, & seipsum secleris-  
reum aut iniustum pecuniae possessorem fieri, quam se in molestiam, iudicium calumniam &  
bonorum suorum maiora multo dispendia subire. Hieron.*

cruel, that it will be their prudence not once to mutter, but silently keep in their grief to themselves, lest if they complained they should exasperate their enemies, and so be worse used. This is an ancient Gloss, but not so genuine.

§ These times were evil times, for even the Rulers of the people were unruly, and corrupt both in doctrine and manners. They were grown so violent and virulent, that they would neither hear, nor bear a reproof; they sought his death, who sought their life; and threw dirt in his face, who shewed them the glass; if any reproved them, they wrested and misinterpreted all their sayings, devising devices against them to destroy them. They were come to that height of sin, that the malady was too strong for the medicine; and good counsel could doe them no good, it was but casting Pearls before Swine, which would be trampled under foot and lost; the more they reproved them for their Bribery, Oppression, Idolatry and cruelty, the more they enraged them, and therefore the prudent shall keep silence, since it is such an evil time.

*Silebit, cum alius nihil proferat, sibi vero malum afferat. Grotius.*

This sense suits best with the context, ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.

Q. But must not Ministers speak against Sin, for fear of bringing themselves into danger, nor speak against the evils of the times, unless they be sure to be free from suffering?

Ans. Ministers are bound by their Office to witness against the worst of evils in the worst of times; so did the Prophets, so did the Apostles. A Minister must not presently give over his Ministry, or forbear reproof because of some approaching danger, yet he may be silent and forbear reproof, when those sins have been sufficiently witnessed against already, and men sin not for want of light, but desperately against the light; in such a case we have no reason to run our selves upon danger; and therefore our Saviour bids us let such alone, *Mat. 13. 14.* when we see that our reproofs doe but exasperate and harden we may yeeld for a time, and reserve

our selves and our exhortations for better times; when mens passions are qualified, and they will hearken to us; so that this makes nothing for Court-Parasites, and Time-servers, who under pretence of Prudence live like dumb Dogges, never once barking against the Idolatry, Superstition, Apostacy, and prophaneness of the times, for fear of displeasing the Grandees of the time; they dare not pray for *Sion*, nor speak in

defence

*Prophetas vocat prudentes, quorum munus est peccatum arguere, qui cum viderint eo tantum aripisse bonam pacem, ut revocari non possint, laudant. Sanctius.*

defence of Gods Cause and People, for fear of suffering. This is so farre from prudence, that it is the greatest imprudence in the world for any man, for fear of mans wrath to run into Gods displeasure, and to avoyd Temporal pains to run into eternal, Christ will be ashamed of such as be thus ashamed of him, and his truth, before an adulterous Generation, *Mark 8. ult. Rev. 21. 8.*

*Obj. Tyrants threaten me.*

*Ans.* And thou must learn to contemne their threatnings. He is not fit to be a Minister of Christ, that cannot suffer as well as doe for him. *Non est Minister Christi qui non est ad mille mortes paratus. Chrysost.*

Every Minister is, or at least ought to be a Souldier of Christs, now a Souldier must not be a whining Milk-sop, but a hardned, seasoned peece, *2 Tim. 2. 3.* Necessity is laid upon us, and woe to us if we preach not the Gospel, *1 Cor. 9. 16.* When God commands us to preach, and man forbids, the Apostle in this very case tells us, that it is better to obey God than man, *Act 4. 19. & 5. 29.* It is no dishonour to the Kings on earth, to see the King of Heaven served before them; yea the worse the times are, the more should the zeal for Gods glory consume us. When *Lor* saw the wickedness of *Sodom*, his righteous soul was vexed from day to day with their abominations. No prudent man can be totally silent, when hee sees his God openly dishonoured, as we see in *David, Nathan, Michajah, Paul, &c.*

The Prophet therefore speaks not here *De jure*, but *De facto*; not what men should doe, or not doe; but he rather intimates (such was the iniquity of the times, and the malice of those in authority) that *De facto*, they would not suffer them to speak against the corruptions of the times. So that they should be silent not Actively, and Spontaneously, but Passively, by reason of the rage of wicked men, and their obstinacy in their Idolatry, Superstition, and unrighteousness. They would not suffer any to speak against these their beloved sins, or if they did, they would cast them into Prisons, or Banishment, or blast them with slanders, or some way or other make them contemptible, and then slay them.

6 And lastly, the most genuine sense of the place is this; The Prophet had told them, that for their mighty and manifold sins they should lose their Houses and Lands, their

*Silere hic sumitur pro non darguere scelera qua grassantur, ad quod tamen silentium redactus est, non sponte sed, sed violentia tyrannorum in illum faventium. Ravan.*

*Silebit i. e. non  
murmurabit  
contra Deum,  
quia agnoscunt  
panam esse ius-  
tam. Piscat.  
See more on A-  
mos 6. 10.*

*Tacebit prudens,  
probus & lau-  
dans iustum  
Dei iudicium  
& impiorum  
supplicium.*

Orchards and Vineyards, and all their pleasant things; now he tells them that God was so just in his Judgements, that all pious prudent men, should in an holy silence and submissiveness of spirit, adore and admire the Justice of God therein, without any fretting or murmuring at them; though they were great and grievous, yet considering the multitude and magnitude of their sins, and comparing Gods dispensations with their provocations, they could not but say, *Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgements.* The true believer which judgeth aright of sin and its concomitants, shall silently acquiesce in the evils of Punishment, which God shall bring upon Israel, but not in the evil of sin which men commit; so that their silence here is opposed to murmuring against God, and not to their reproof of the sins of the time: for we read that the Prophets did not hold their peace, but *Amos* and *Hosea* especially did sharply reprove those wicked men, and denounced Gods Judgements against them to the last.

## OBSERVATIONS.

## 1. Pious men are prudent men.

*Quicumq; peccat, agit contra rationem rectam, que est prudentia. Aquinas.  
In my Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 9.*

*Rerum exitus prudentia monstratur. Boethius.*

He that truly fears God is the true *Hammaskil*, he is the only wise, intelligent, prudent man. When we walk exactly according to Rule, that is true wisdom, *Ephes. 5. 15.* Hence fifty times in the *Proverbs* the godly man is called a Wiseman, and every wicked man a fool. When men know the true God, and serve him in a true manner with a perfect heart, this is real and supernatural wisdom, *Job 28. ult.* all other men be they never so worldly wise are fools, and madmen (as I have proved at large elsewhere) Hee only is the wise Merchant that hath parted with all for Christ, *Matth. 13. 44.* The world looks upon good men as a pack of Fools, scarce fit to live in the world, but see how the Holy Ghost here dignifies them with the title of *prudent men*, whose understandings are well inlightened in the knowledge of their duty, and what is fit to be done, in respect of time, place, manner, event, &c. he searcheth into the very bottom of things, and sees them inwardly.

1. Their prudence appears, in a wise discerning of times and seasons. There is a fit time for every thing, and what is done in

in that season it is beautiful. Now the prudent man observes the season, he hath a singular skill in timing a word, *Isa. 50. 4.* He knows when to speak, so did *Abigail*, 1 Sam. 25. 36. and *Hester* 1. 13. and when to be silent 3 *King. 18. 36.* It was an high commendation of the men of *Issachar*, that they were men of understanding and knew the times, and what *Israel* ought to do, 1 *Chron. 12. 32.*

See Dr. Amossey  
Ser. on 2 *Chro.*  
12. 32. preached  
1655.

2 His Prudence appears in works of *Piety*, he reads, prays, meditates, &c. with prudence and discretion. He observes fit times to hear, and he is swift to hear, *James* 1. 19. He watcheth unto prayer, and observes the fittest times for that exercise, *Ephes. 6. 18.*

3 In works of mercy. 1 To the soul, he prudently times his speech, and wisely considereth the party which he speaks to, and what his condition requires, *Isa. 40. 4.*

See Caryl on  
*Job. 3. 2. p. 3. 10.*

2 To the outward man, he gives discreetly according to those known circumstances, required in giving.

before on  
*Amos 4. 4. p. 50.*  
&c.

*Est modus in dando, Quid, cur, cui, quomodo, quando.*

4 In executing Justice, he weighs and ponders all circumstances, and then gives sentence accordingly.

See my Com.  
on *Psal. 82. 4. p.*  
112.

5 In the discharge of his particular calling, he orders his affairs with discretion, *Psal. 112. 5. Prov. 14. 8, 15.*

6 He fore-sees dangers, and prepares for them before they come, *Job 3. 25. Prov. 22. 3.* and stops troubles in the beginning, *Gen. 13. 8, 9.* He is quick-sighted, and wise as a Serpent, though harmless as a Dove, *Matth. 10. 16.* Religion doth not destroy our wisdom, but rectifies it, and makes it more solid. Hence *Jacob* used all prudent means to pacifie *Esau*, *Gen. 38. 4, 5, &c.* and *Paul* to deliver himself, pleads that he was a *Roman*, and set the Pharisees and Sadduces at variance about the Resurrection, the better to escape himself, *Act. 16. 37, 38.* and 22. 25. and 23. 7. and Christ himself used it, *Mat. 21. 24.* Hence he is said to deal prudently, *Isa. 52. 17.*

7 His Prudence appears in his Prudent choice. A mans wisdom appears in nothing so much as in that. He passeth by transitory, fading, uncertain, earthly things, and chuseth real, solid, substantial, durable riches, which none can take from him, *Luke 10. 41, 42.* and 16. 9. He seeks Gods face and favour, and makes him his ultimate and chiefest good. Hence to be wise, and seek after God are joyned together, *Psal. 14. 2.* He



is most solidly wise, who doth most solidly and seriously seek God.

8 They act so strenuously as if they were to do all themselves, and when they have done all, yet they rest upon God, and seek unto him by prayer as if they had done nothing, Gen. 32.7. to 11. and 43.10. to 14. Neh. 4.9.

Nullum numen  
abest, si sit pru-  
dentia. Juven.  
Sat. 10.  
In omni virtute  
debet esse. 1. Pru-  
dentia. 2. Justi-  
tia. 3. Fortitudo.

So that prudence you see is a Cardinal vertue, of all vertues it is one of the most eminent and excellent, and makes us most like unto God. Where this vertue is in reality, no vertue is wanting. This is one special means to raise men to honour, as we see in Joseph, David, Abigail, Nehemiah, Daniel, &c.

To attain it, 1 We must beg it of the God of Wisdom and Prudence, who is the true doner of it, 1 Chron. 22.12. 1 King. 3.9. 11. 12. Psal. 119. 125, 144, 169. 2 Cor. 1. 10, 11, 12. James 1.5.

2 Get acquaintance with the word of God, make it the man of your counsel, consult with it in all your actions and undertakings. This will make you wiser than the Ancient, wiser than your enemies (though they may be deep Politicians) and wiser than your Teachers, 1. 9. 98, 99, 100, 104.

Temeritas est  
floreantis etatis,  
prudentia sen-  
ectutis, Cicero.

3 Treasure up experiments: As in all other Arts and Sciences a man can never excell, till he hath by long practice gained experience: so it is here. We see that youth it is heady and rash, but Prudence is usually with the aged, Job 12.12. With the Ancient is wisdom.

[See more Balls Power of Godliness, 1. 1. c. 3. p. 3. to 29. Bain on Eph. 5. 15. Hieron on Psal. 51. 6. Leighs Body of Divinity, 1. 7. c. 29. p. 58. &c. Lessius de Jura & Just. p. 1. &c.]

2 Obi. That it is a point of prudence sometimes to keep silence.

As there is a time to speak Eccles. 3. 7. viz. when God may be glorified, and our brethren edified, so there is a time to be silent, viz. when we have no call to speak, or understand not the depth of the matter in question, or when our own passions, or the passions of those we speak to are up, and men are in an heat, then it is good to be silent. A man that will give counsel, or take counsel must have a composed, calmed, quiet spirit, before he can profit himself, or others; even Christ himself, though he had many things to say, yet seeing his Disciples could

could not bear them, he concealed them, *Job* 16. 12. Hence silence is oft made a note of prudence, *Prov.* 17. 12, and 12. 16. and 23. 17. 27. 28. Herein *Saul's* wisdom appeared, *1 Sam.* 10. 16. and *David's*, *Psal.* 35. 12, 13, 14. and *Christ's*, *Mat.* 26. 63.

But especially when a people are incorrigible and incurable, when they are dogs and swine, flying in the face of a reprove, and trampling Gods truths under their feet, we are then commanded to forbear, *Prov.* 9. 7-8. *Hos.* 4. 4. 17. *Mat.* 7. 6. and 15. 14. lest they abuse, not only the truth, but those that publish it too, for God is tender as of his Gospel, so of those that publish it also. So when those sins we reprove have been sufficiently witnessed against already, so that men sin not for want of light, but directly against light, in such a case we have no obligation to run our selves into danger; so when there is no probability that the evil which we bring our selves into, shall be balanced with any proportionable good to others; for this is an affirmative precept, and binds *semper*, but not *ad semper*; it binds at all times, but not to all times, but only when God may be glorified, his people edified, and his enemies mouths stopped; and therefore it is well observed by a Reverend Divine, *Thus when times are so evil, that they will not bear evil to be spoken against, nor good to be spoken, it is time for the prudent to keep silence; for though in some cases we must bear our testimony openly for truth and holiness, whether men will hear is or no, yet we are not urged with that necessity at all times, &c.* Such times there may be, when it will be our wisdom to be silent (at least for a while) as Mariners use to cast anchor in a storm, and rest for a time till it be over, and Water-men when the Tyde is against them, they creep by the Bank-sides till having advantage of the Tyde they can get over more easily. *Paul* was zealous against *Diana* at *Ephesus*, yet his prudence so moderated his zeal, that he spake not particularly against *Diana*, but openly delivered this general Doctrine, *That they were no Gods which were made with hands.* The prudent man considers not only what he ought to do, but also what he can do, and sometimes gives place to the storm, reserving himself for better times as *Elijah* did when he fled from *Jezabel*, and *Paul* was let down in a Basket.

Many cry out the times are bad; when by their unadvised speeches,

Mr. Carylton  
Job 19. 9. p.  
492.

See my Com-  
on 2 Tim. 4. 1.  
p. 339.

See Mr. Edw. Symonds Ser. on Amos 5. 13. preached 1642. Greenhill on Ezek. 29. 21. and Mr. Baxter's Ser. on Jam. 1. 25. p. 231.

See Balls Power of Godliness 1. 1. c. 2. p. 18. &c. Against Scepticks Gelaspius Miscel. c. 11 p. 134.

Parum interest inter fidem negare, & nolle asserere. Fulgent.

See more in Amos 6. 10.

speeches, rash censures; and bitter invectives, even against Dignities, and those in Authority, they help to make them worse. This they make a part of their wisdom, when they never shew themselves more fools, and indiscreet; for if they be prudent that keep silence in evil times, then they are fools that prate so much. Prayer and patience is the best cure for calamitous times.

*Caution.* I speak not this as if we might dissemble our Religion, and like Scepticks deny that to morrow which we hold to-day, and so have a menstruous faith, turning with every wind; that so we may sleep in a whole skin. No, we must be rooted and grounded in the truth, always ready to make an open, plain, and bold confession when ever God shall call us to it by Authority, *Matth. 10. 8, 9. Rom. 10. 9, 10. 2 Tim. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 3. 15.* We must be ready not onely (*προς ἀπολογία*) but *προς ἀπολογία* to make an answer but to Apologize in defence of the truth, else we shall be accounted as enemies, *Hesbat is not with me, is against me, Matth. 12. 30.* There is no true faith within, when no true love without.

3 *Obt.* The godly must be patiently silent in calamitous times.

They must not fret nor fume, but kiss the hand that smites them, judging themselves, and justifying God in all his dispensations to us, such a holy submissive frame was in *David, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 12. Psal. 39. 9. and 37. 7. and Job 1. 21, and 2. 10, and 40. 5. and in Christ, Act. 8. 32, 1 Pet. 2. 21.*

The prudent man can see a good hand of providence in all, he can see light in darkness, comfort in discomfort, rising in raining, all things for good, *Rom. 8. 28.* and this keeps him silent. He sees an absolute Sovereignty in providence, the Lord may take away health, wealth, life, &c. and none may say unto him, what dost thou? *Job 9. 12.* The prudent man sees all Gods dispensations, ordered with infinite wisdom, *Job 9. 4.* The Lord weighs all the afflictions which he dispenseth to his people, *Jer. 18. 11.* and frames the evil which he brings upon them, *Lam. 2. 17.* yet he deliberates and deviseth evil even against *Babylon, Jer. 51. 12.* He likewise seeth Justice in all, and that he is punished less than his sins deserve; and this makes him lay his hand upon his mouth, and say,

say, though the Lords dispensations seem harsh and hard; yet the Lord is righteous in all his wayes, and holy in all his works, *Pfal. 145. 17. Micah 6. 9.*

Lastly, he considers that all is done, *by an infinite reaching providence*, which looks at many things at once; the same Warre shall humble the Church, destroy *Babylon*, and set *Jeremy* free; God hath Plots above the plots of Politicians, and ends that they think not of; his wayes are deep and mysterious, above our reach, *Isa. 45. 15.* The same pillar of Cloud shall be dark to *Egypt*, yet give light to *Israel*. The same fire shall refine the mettall, and consume the dross; let patience then have its perfect work, *Jam. 1. 4.* so shall we keep the possession of our owne souls, and it may be get the possession of other mens too.

Motives to Patience, see my Com. on Hol. 12. 13. p. 10, 11. Mr. Symons Ser. on Luk. 21. 19. p. 97, &c.

## VERSE 14.

*Seek good and not evil, that yee may live, and so the Lord the God of Hosts shall be with you, as yee have spoken.*

THE Prophet once more renews his Exhortation to Repentance, he had called on them thrice before, *Seek, seek, seek*; he comes now with a fourth *Quarite* (if by any means he might work upon them) *Seek good and not evil.*

In the words we have  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1 \text{ A Precept.} \\ 2 \text{ A Prohibition.} \\ 3 \text{ A Promise.} \end{array} \right.$

I We have a Precept, *Seek good*, viz. such as is prescribed by God in his Word; q. d. *You have formerly followed evil and the Devil the father of it, in worshipping Idols which are oft called Devils; but now return to the Lord, seek good, especially seek God who is the fountain of goodness, that you may live indeed.*

Judicious Calvin following the Chalde Paraphrase, renders it, *Secke beneficence*, (*at salva reverentia tanto viro dignissima*) I conceive this Exposition to be too strait, for by *ud est quam dare operam beneficentia*. Calvin appears by comparing this place with *verf. 4, 6.* To seek God is

is to seek good, and to finde life, for with him is the fountain of life. *Psal. 36. 9.*

2 I do not find the word *Tob* to signifie beneficence in any place of Scripture, but it is rendred good, pleasant, profitable, fair, sweet, joyous; all which are very desirable things, and therefore should quicken our endeavours after them.

3 Yet I deny not but beneficence may be one branch of that good which is here called for; seeing they had been given to violence and rapine, now he calls upon them to return, and by beneficence and works of mercy to break off their trade of cruelty, and to seek God, and all manner of good contained both in the first and second Table, that so they might live.

*Querere bonum & non malum si studiose sectari bonum,*

*à malo vero abhorrere; atque ad id est respicere, pietati & bonis operibus studere, & vitam sanctam agere. Ravanel.*

2 Here is a *Prohibition*, *Seek not evil* any longer, to which you have been addicted for so many years, *Amos 2. 4.* If you will be mine (saith the Lord) you must give your sins a Bill of divorce, for no man can serve two such contrary Masters. *Shun evil*, i. e. all manner of sin without exception, for Sin and Evil are Synonyma's in Scripture, *Rom. 7. 19, 20.* that which the Apostle calls evil in one verse; he calls it sin in the next. Sin is truly called evil, 1. *Formaliter & per se.* 2. *Effectivè.*

*Ratio, malum, in quod, dicitur.*

1. It is evil in its owne nature, it is a transgression of Gods Law, and is directly oppositè to him who is the chiefest good. 2. It is the cause of all the evil of punishment both in this life and the next, *Rom. 6. 21.* Sin is the cause of Gods Wrath, and Gods Wrath brings destruction and misery with it; so that sin being *Causa causa*, must needs be *Causa causati.* 3. It comes from the Devil, that evil one, and leads to him, and so may well be called *evil*, 1. *Joh. 3. 8.*

3 Here is a double promise to incourage them to set upon the duty. 1. *You shall live*, of which before, vers. 4. 2. *The Lord of Hosts will be with you*; if you will but return, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, you shall be secured from wrath to come, and received into Gods favour, he will dwell in the midst of you, and bless you. There is an Emphasis and weight

weigh in that little word, *So*; Seek good and not evil, and when you are so qualified, fitted, and prepared by holiness for communion with an holy God, and your wills are made conformable to Gods will, then he will be with you, by his Wisdom to direct you, by his Power to protect you, by his Mercy to pardon you, by his goodness to provide for you, so as you shall want nothing that may be for your good, according to those precious promises, *Levit. 26. 12, 13. 1 King 6. 13. Psal. 84. 11.* Thus when the people were called to the Passover, they are commanded to prepare themselves, and so to come, *2 Chron. 35. 6.*

4 Here is the manner how the Lord will be with them, and that is, *Even as yee have spoken*, q. d. you boast and brag that you are my people, my peculiar, my inheritance, my Children, and that I will direct you, defend you, and provide for your safety, but these are but your owne vaine dreams and delusions, for you cannot be my people, so long as you walk contrary to my commands, persecuting my Prophets, trampling upon my Poor, hating righteousness, and loving iniquity. But if you will be my people indeed, then walk as becomes my people, *Seek good, and not evil*; returne sincerely unto me, and then *the Lord will be with you indeed, as you have spoken*. You shall finde him really present with you, to assist and comfort you, but till this be done you cannot expect his favour, two cannot walk together till they be agreed, *Amos 3. 3.*

Others read it thus; *So the Lord shall be with you as you desire, q. d.* It is your desire and prayer that God should abide with you, doe you seek and serve him faithfully, and then you shall finde it true that yee have spoken. But the former reading is most genuine. The sum of all is this, *Hitherto your life, O yee men of Israel, hath been a series of iniquity, you have followed Idols and evil, but not good; you have contemned God despised his Prophets, despised his Spirit, oppressed the poor, multiplied sin; and yet you promise your selves peace and prosperity, life and happiness, boasting that the Lord is your God, and you are his Covenant-people, and therefore you need no fear. But if you will indeed live, then hearken to my counsel, Turne from your Idols, Worship the Lord in sincerity, amend your lives, and give up your selves to God, walking in paths of piety and obe-*



once before him, and then the Lord will be with you indeed, and you shall live in his favour for ever.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 The destruction of wicked men is from themselves, Hof. 13. 9.

See Mr. Obad.  
Sedgwick on  
Isa. 55. 1. p.  
397, 402, &c.  
See *Finney* on  
Willful Impe-  
nitency.

The fault is not in God, for he calls upon them here again, and again, to return and live, and swears that he desires not the death of sinners, Ezek. 18. 31, 32. & 33. 11. he gives them hopes of pardon if they will but come in, and lay down the armes of their rebellion. God is not to be blamed, it is mens owne wilful impenitency that ruins them.

2 Obs. *Such as seek God shall find good.*

See a nine-fold  
good in God,  
Mr. Obad. Sedg-  
wick on Isa 55.  
2. ch. 11. p. 441.

Before he called upon them to seek God, and now he explaines himself, and tells them what that is, it is to seek good. Good is the object of our desires, now there is none good but God, he only is Essentially, infinitely, absolutely, and independently good; all the good that is in the Creature it is finite, dependent, derivative, and is found eminently only in God. All the goodness that is scattered up and down in the Creature meets eminently in him, so that have him, and have all. The Devil, the World, and Sn promise men good, but there is no reality in those promises. They make golden promises, but leaden performances; they promise joy, but bring forth sorrow: they promise liberty, but they bring men into thralldome. But God is better than his word to his people, and doth for them above all that they can speak or think. Seek therefore him, and you shall finde all manner of good for soul and body, for this life and a better; and after all changes you shall experimentally conclude with David, *It is good for me to draw near to God*, Psal 73. ult.

3 Obs. *It is not sufficient that we seek good, but we must also turn from evil.*

God hath oft joyned them together, and we may not separate them, Psal. 34. 14. & 37. 27. Isa. 1. 16, 17. Matth. 3. 10. Luke 13. 7, 8. Ephes. 4. 22, 23. Colos. 3. 9, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 11. It is not sufficient that we turne from evil, but we must doe good. A negative Christian is no Christian. *Dives* did not rob *Lazarus*, yet is condemned for not relieving him. So those,

those, *Matth. 35. 42, 43. &c.* Many would have God and their sins too like the *Samaritans* that served God, and their Idols too *2 King 17. 33, 34* but he that turns to God, must give a bill of divorce to his former sins, he must forget his kindred and his fathers house, *Psal. 45. 10, 11.* we that were sometimes slaves to sin, must now become servants to God, and it must be as natural and delightful to us to serve him, as ever it was to sin against him. As a vessel that is full of poyson must bee empried of it, before it can bee filled with better liquor; so our hearts must be purged from corruption, before they can be filled with grace. Most pretend that they are the Lords people, and that they belong to him; but if we be his, he saies to us; as *Jehu* said to the men of *Samaria* when they complemented with him, and told him they were his servants, and would do all that he should bid them. *If you will be mine, (saith Jehu,) then cut off the heads of your Masters sons, and send them to me,* *2 King. 10. 5, 6.* So if we be the Lords real servants, we must cut off not the heads of our sons, but of our sins; nor sacrifice our children, but our selves to God, mortifying our beloved corruptions, and then he will be our God, and we shall be his people.

4 Obs. *The special presence of God with a people, is a choice mercy.*

Hence the Church so oft glories in this, *Psal. 46. 1, 7, 11.* *The Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge;* and sadly laments the want of it, *Jer. 14. 8, 9.* as the in-let into all misery, *Deut. 31. 17. Jer. 6. 8.* Gods special presence is the glory of a place, *Zach. 2. 5.* God himself will be an impregnable wall of fire to defend his people, and to offend their adversaries, and their glory in the midst of them. Where God comes, peace and plenty, consolation and protection, and all good comes. Hence they are pronounced blessed and happy, that have the Lord for their God, *Psal. 144. ult.* as I have shewed at large elsewhere. As the residence of a King is the glory of a place, so Gods presence amongst his people makes them glorious. Hence the name of Gods Church, is *Jehovah-Shammah, The Lord is there, Ezek. 48. ult.* hee is there as the founder, favourer, and preserver of it: It is more to say, *The Lord is here,* than to say peace and plenty, and all creature-comforts are here, you may make what you

once before him, and then the Lord will be with you indeed, and you shall live in his favour for ever.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 The destruction of wicked men is from themselves, Hof. 13. 9.

See Mr. Obad. Sedgwick on Isa. 55. 1. p. 397, 402, &c. See Fenner on Wilful Impenitency.

The fault is not in God, for he calls upon them here again, and again, to return and live, and swears that he desires not the death of sinners, Ezek. 18. 31, 32. & 33. 11. he gives them hopes of pardon if they will but come in, and lay down the armes of their rebellion. God is not to be blamed, it is mens owne wilful impenitency that ruines them.

2 Obs. *Such as seek God shall find good.*

See a nine-fold good in God, Mr. Obad. Sedgwick on Isa 55. 2. ch. 11. p. 441.

Before he called upon them to seek God, and now he explains himself, and tells them what that is, it is to seek good. Good is the object of our desires, now there is none good but God, he only is Essentially, infinitely, absolutely, and independently good; all the good that is in the Creature it is finite, dependent, derivative, and is found eminently only in God. All the goodness that is scattered up and down in the Creature meets eminently in him, so that have him, and have all. The Devil, the World, and Sin promise men good, but there is no reality in those promises. They make golden promises, but leaden performances; they promise joy, but bring forth sorrow: they promise liberty, but they bring men into thralldome. But God is better than his word to his people, and doth for them above all that they can speak or think. Seek therefore him, and you shall finde all manner of good for soul and body, for this life and a better; and after all changes you shall experimentally conclude with David, *It is good for me to draw near to God*; Psal 73. ult.

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will out of it, for all happiness is contained up in this short promise, *I am with thee.*

§ *Obf. Impenitent sinners may think themselves highly in Gods favour, when he is greatly incensed against them for their wickedness.*

These Israelites because they had some priviledges, therefore they concluded that God loved them, and would never punish them for their Idolatry, bribery, cruelty. But they conceived that he would abide still amongst them; as they had vainly said; but the Lord tells them, That he abhorred both them and their services whilst they walked in such irreligious practises, *vers. 21. 22. 23.* So it was in *Judah*, their Judges were corrupt, and their Prophets covetous, yet they lean upon the Lord, and conclude that God was amongst them, and for them still, *Micah 3. 11.* but *vers. 12.* they found that he was amongst them to their sorrow.

#### VERSE 15.

*Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgement in the gate, it may be that the Lord God of Hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.*

**T**HE Prophet still goes on with his Exhortation to Repentance, he had to do with an hardened people, upon whom sleight Exhortations would make no impression, such hard knots and knarls must have hard beetles and wedges; such rough humours must have stronger physick; and therefore the Prophet that he might drive this nail to the head, renews his Exhortation, and calls upon them a fifth time to forsake their evil wayes, and to turn to the Lord who was ready to receive them.

Repentance consists of two parts: The first is a dying to sin: The second is a living to Righteousness. We have both in the Text. 1 We must *hate evil*, there is dying to sin. 2 *Love good*, there is living to Righteousness.

*Sine ira et odio  
habete & pro-  
sequimini ma-  
lum.*

*Hate evil*, that is, hate sin which is the evil of evils. It is evil in it self, and the cause of all the evils in the world. Do not only forbear sin, and refrain from it for a time, and then return with the dog to his vomit; but hate it, not with a sleight,

Neigh, toothless hatred, but with a deep, implacable hatred, such as men use to have against their deadly enemies, whom they prosecute with the greatest violence.

*Do good.* It is not sufficient that we shun evil, but we must also do good. We must not onely pull up weeds, but we must bring forth good fruit, for man, matter and manner. We must do good not compulsively and forcedly, but *freely*, Psal. 110. 3. *Give bonum.* sincerely out of love to goodness, *cheerfully*, Deut. 28. 47. and *constantly*, Luke 1. 5, 6, 7. *Zachary* and *Eliazabeth* lived in the dayes of *Herod* a known Tyrant, yet they feared him not, but kept their righteousness, not onely in their youth, but in their old age, the Text saith they were well stricken in years, yet they continued righteous before God.

*Anebu tob, ar-  
dentior & ve-  
hementer dili-  
git bonum.*

*Iusti fuer-  
e iustitiā sincerā,  
non simulatā,  
nec tantum ho-  
minibus se pro-  
babant, sed  
Deo. Cantabr.  
Hym.*

3 Because their Master-sin was injustice, therefore he calls upon them to testify the truth of their repentance by parting with their beloved sin, establishing justice openly in the gate, by setting up such just Judges as should execute justice faithfully and impartially without respect of persons, *q. d. Hitherto ye have neglected justice*, Amos 4. 1. and 5. 12. *and have made your lusts your Laws, and have ruled according to your own will, and not according to my will; but now repent, and execute justice, then will I shew mercy and favour to you.*

4 The better to encourage them, here is a promise of mercy. *The Lord will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.* The *Assyrian* had made great slaughters amongst them, and left them but a remnant, 2 King 14. 26. yet he bids this remnant return, for then *he would be gracious to the remnant of Joseph*, that is to the remnant of *Israel*, as before, verse 6. He had told them before, vers. 1. that God would decimate them, and here he tells them that God would be merciful to this decimated Remnant if they would but return to him.

5 To keep them from security, the Prophet comes in with a *peradventure*, the Lord will be gracious to you: He sayes not *positively* and *absolutely*, The Lord will destroy you, for then hee had made them desperate; nor yet assertively that God would deliver them, for that would have made them presumptuous and careless; but he useth a prudent, well tempered speech, which on the one hand might keep them from presumption, and on the other from desperation. (So wise and



and cautious should all Gods Ministers be) yet he gives them a little crevise of light and hope, and comes with a *peradventure* the Lord may yet be gracious to them. He speaks somewhat doubtfully to shew the difficulty of the work, and the better to excite their industry, and awaken them out of their security. Such *bene sperantium formula*, such hints of hope are very frequent in Scripture, 1 Sam. 14. 6. and 2. 12, 22. and 16. 12. Lam. 3. 29. Joel 2. 14. Jonah 3. 9. Zeph. 2. 3.

Ob. The Papists to keep their vassals in darkness and doubting, amongst other Scriptures they bring in this to prove that no man can be assured of his Election and Salvation in this life.

Ans. But the Answer is easie; 1 The Lord doth not speak here of the Election, or eternal salvation of such as truly repent; but of their deliverance from outward afflictions and calamities which were threatned against them for their sins, vers. 6. These sometimes the Lord inflicts upon his people notwithstanding their repentance (as we see in David) and this he doth either for chastisement to make them flye from sin for the future, or else for trial.

2 The Lord sometimes after he hath threatned judgements upon the wicked, yet upon their feigned humiliation holds his hand (that the world may see how highly he esteems the true repentance of his people) as we see in Ahab and the Ninivites. Considering therefore these various dispensations of God, the Prophet speaks doubtfully here, and exhorts them to repent, referring the event to Gods wise and gracious providence. So that such places speaking of temporary chastisements, make nothing against the certainty of our Election.

3 The particle *Ulai*, peradventure, is not alwayes dubitative, but sometimes assertive, q. d. Seek the Lord sincerely, and then without doubt, he will receive you graciously, and so the word is used, Josh. 14. 12. Peradventure the Lord will be with me, and I shall drive them out. Caleb speaks not here dubitatively, but beleevingly, q. d. Though the work be difficult, yet the Lord will be with me, and by his help I shall drive out these formidable Giants out of Canaan, so Hester 4. 14. So here the Prophet doth not question whether God will receive a penitent sinner to mercy, for that the Scripture proves abundantly, Ezek. 33. 11. but the Prophet by this peradventure, gives

gives them some hopes that if they would turn to God, he would turn to them, and either remove or sanctifie these calamities which were coming on them.

4 *Duo*, Suppose we grant that it is a doubting speech, yet it makes not for their purpose, for it is not to be referred to God, as though it were doubtful whether he would pardon the sins of penitents, for we have his hand and seal for that. But it is to be referred to those secure sinners, of whose repentance the Prophet might well doubt, lest either it would be none at all, or else but feigned and hypocritical.

Yea fifthly, Should we grant that it is a doubtful speech, and to be referred to God, yet it maketh nothing for Popish or Arminian doubting, for the Prophet seeing to what a height of impiety these sinners were come, thought it not fit to comfort them presently, and raise them up suddenly, but first to humble them, and by speaking doubtfully to give them a hint of the hainousness of their sins, as though it might well be doubted whether the Lord would forgive them or no, that so they being feared and humbled, might be fitted for mercy: And because things that are hardly come by are more earnestly sought, therefore the Prophet intimates unto them, that it was no easie matter to obtain forgiveness for such hainous sins, that he might hereby incite them to a more thorow repentance, and crying for mercy.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Good things must be often pressed upon us.*

This People were so hardned and habituated in sin, and Satan had so besotted them, that they took darkness for light, and evil for good; so that the Prophet was forced to double and treble his Exhortations to them, and to give them line upon line, and Precept upon precept, and to drive the nails of the Temple day after day, till they were fastned in their hearts, *Eccles. 12. 11.* We are like a dull Knife, which must be whetted over and over till it be brought to an edge; It is the very metaphor of the Holy Ghost, *Dent. 6. 7. Thou shalt teach (or whet) my word upon thy Children*; they must so sharpen it that it may make a deep impression upon their hearts.

*Shaman, i. e. a  
vir, repetitis,  
acut.*

See the evil of Sin in D. *Pres-*  
*ter*, on Acts 9.  
 6. p. 271, 72.  
 D. *Bellous* Ser.  
 on 1 Sam. 24.  
 10. & Mr. *Bur-*  
*roughs* Evil of  
 sin. B. *ushers*  
*Meditat.* p. 93,  
 121.

Αποσυγ-  
 γες, abhorrentes  
 à malo. The  
 simple Verb  
 imports detesta-  
 tion, which is  
 increased by  
 the composition.

2 Obs. Sin is an evil thing.

Hate evil, that is, hate sin, it is indeed the evil of evils; all other plagues and evils are as nothing compared with this. A man may lye under sad afflictions, and yet be under dear affections. It is sin alone that makes us the object of Gods hatred, and therefore it should be the object of ours, it should be abominable in our sight which is so abominable in it self,

*Jer.* 44. 4.

3 Obs. We must not only forbear sin, but we must hate it.

As many a man refrains from an Oath, that yet never fears an Oath, *Eccles.* 9. 2. so many a man forbears sin, that doth not truly hate it. A wicked man for fear, or shame, or for some self-ends may refrain sin for a time, but a good man hates it with a deep, deadly, implacable, irreconcilable hatred. Such as love the Lord cannot but hate evil, *Psal.* 97. 10. yea they abhor it, now abhorrency is the height of hatred, *Rom.* 12. 9. *Abhor that which is evil*; hate it, as you would hate Hell it self.

2 We must hate it *Universally*, true hatred is *πρὸς τὰ γένη*, (saith *Aristotle*) it is against the whole kind. He that truly hates one sin as it is sin, will hate every sin, *Quatenus ipsum includit de omni*. As the Persecutors hatred is not against one or two good men, but against the whole Church of God, his desire is, that the very name of *Israel* might be had no more in remembrance, *Psal.* 83. 4. and therefore they seek to raze it to the very foundation, *Psal.* 137. 7. even so should we deal with sin.

3 We must hate it not only *Odio aversionis*, but also *Odio inimicitia*, not only fly from it, but pursue it with an hatred of enmity.

4 Obs. *Exercising of Justice and Judgement is a duty very pleasing unto God.*

Hence the Lord so oft calls for it both here, and elsewhere, *Jer.* 1. 17. *Psal.* 82. 3, 4. See my Comment on that place.

5 Obs. *When the Lord delivers his people from outward Judgements, or pardons their sins, it is meer grace and mercy, but no merit of ours that moves him to it.*

Peradventure the Lord will be gracious to you; It is one of Gods royal Attributes to be *Gracious*, and to love freely,  
*Exod.*

See D. *Reynolds*  
 on the Passi-  
 ons. Chap. 12.  
 13, 14. & C.  
 Church his Mi-  
 sel. p. 107. &  
 D. Tho. *Taylor*s  
 Ser. folio. p.  
 439. *Balls* Po-  
 wer of Godli-  
 ness, lib. 3. ch 3.  
 p. 201.

*Exod. 34. 6.* from the Alpha of our Election, to the Omega of our Salvation, all is Free-grace, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
2 Tim. 4. 8. p.  
406, 409.

6 Obs. In times of distress God usually gives his people some grounds of hope, and some glimpse of comfort to quicken them to duty.

Hence he so oft comes with a peradventure God may give repentance, *2 Tim. 2. 25.* who can tell, and who knows whether God may not repent of the evil that he intends against us? *Joel 2. 14. Jonah 3. 9.* let us then use the means, and commit the success to God. Take away hope, and you take away endeavour; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart. Though thy sins have been great and grievous, yet pray, and use the means, peradventure they may be pardoned, *Acts 8. 22, 23.* arise and be doing, and say as *Jonathan* did, when he went up against the Philistines, *1 Sam. 14. 6.* Come, let us go against these uncircumcised, it may be the Lord will work for us, for it is all one with him, to save with many, or with few. Be not therefore dejected or despondent, it is the nature of faith to oppose discouragements, Love knows no difficulties, but makes men active; say thou as the Lepers, *2 King. 7. 3, 4.* Why sit we here till we dye? if we stay in the City we shall dye of the famine, if we sit still we perish; come, let us fall upon the Host of the Syrians, we can but dye. Nothing venture and nothing have.

# VERSE 16, 17.

Therefore the Lord the God of Hosts, the Lord saith thus, Wailing shall be in all streets, and they shall say in all High wayes, Alas, alas! and they shall call the Husbandsmen to mourning, and such as are skilful of lamentation, to wailing.

And in all Vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass thorough thee, saith the Lord.

THE Prophet had often fore-warned this obstinate people of Judgements approaching, and called upon them to fly from the wrath to come; but since they contemned the Word

and warnings of the Lord, he tells them now that the Sword should come and cut them off; and as they had sinned generally both in City and Country, so now they should be punished generally, for all places should be filled with weeping and wailing.

The Prophet having finished his Exhortation to Repentance, now returns to his Threatnings again; where we have the sad Calamities which were coming upon *Israel*;

Set forth {<sup>1</sup> By the wailing which should be in all streets.  
<sup>2</sup> By the weeping which should be in all High-ways.

2 By the Persons which should mourn. {<sup>1</sup> Natural, real mourners, { Citizen,  
as the { Husbandman,  
<sup>2</sup> Artificial, hired mourners, and such as { Vinitor.  
had skil in Lamentation.

3 Here is the reason and ground of all this weeping and wailing, and that is *Israels* impenitency, and contempt of those warnings which God gave them by the Prophets. They would not hearken to their counsel, but hated reproof, *Therefore wailing shall be in all streets.*

4 Here is the certainty of all this, *It is the Lord, the God of Hosts that says it.* The better to awaken them, he tells them they had not to doe with a dead Idol, or with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who was able to inflict whatever he had threatened against them, as appears by the majestick Titles which are given to him, who is the Lord, the God of Hosts. This people were apt to sooth themselves, and cry peace when there was no peace, and therefore the Prophet deals plainly with them, and bids them not flatter themselves with thoughts of impunity, for their mirth should now be turned into mourning, and their singing into sorrow; yea such sad calamities should come upon them, that all should mourn, both Citizens and rusticks, both real and Artificial mourners.

1 The Citizen shall lament in the streets, the loss of his friends, and riches:

2 The Husband-man shall lament, to see all his labours swept away by the cruel *Assyrian*.

3 The *Vinitor* that was wont to sing for joy, shall now lament for the loss of his Vintage.

4 All others should lament in the very high wayes, the several distresses which should come upon them, crying, Alas! *Ho, ho, beushcu! quæ vox est gentis & plan- gentis fragorem Samaria. Hic-ron.*

5 Their calamity should be so great, that those which were wont to be hired in an Histrionical, mimical manner to lament and howl at Funerals, should now mourn in sober sadness, and good earnest, and therefore the Prophet sayes, they shall call not only for the Husbandmen, but also for those that are skilful in lamentation, that they may weep together. As in a time of mirth men call their neighbours together to rejoyce with them, *Luke 15. 6.* So in this time of great mourning, they shall call the Citizen, the Husbandman, the Vinitor, and the Artificial mourner to bear their parts in this doleful Ditty.

*Call for such as are skilful of lamentation to wailing.*

It was the custome of those times in those Eastern Countries in times of great mourning to send for singing-men and singing-women that could sing Artificial lamentations to provoke men to weeping, *2 Chron. 35. 25. Job 3. 8. Eccles. 12. 6.* Their miseries here should be so great that they could not sufficiently bewail themselves, and therefore they should send for these to help them. The Jews of latter times borrowed such a corrupt custome of the Heathens to augment their grief at Funerals.

1 They had *Minstrels*, which with their mournful tones and sad tunes inclined the affections of the people to mourning for the dead. Of these there were two sorts, 1 Some played on Pipes. 2 Others sounded Trumpets. At the Funerals of great men they sounded Trumpets, and at the Funerals of inferior persons they sounded Pipes. Hence we read that when Jesus raised *Jarius* his daughter, he cast out the Minstrels, *Matt. 9. 23. Mark 5. 38.* *Cantabat magis tibia funebus. Ovid. Fastor 1. 6.*

2 The women especially that had an art in mourning, and skill in making exquisite lamentation, were hired at Burials for the same purpose, where going along with the Corps by outward significations of their sorrow both by voice and gesture, they moved the company more strongly to mourning and to sympathize with them. These the *Romans* called *pra-* See in Mr. Caylon *Job 3. 8.*



ut qui condu-  
cti plorant in  
funere, dicunt  
Et faciant pro-  
pe plura dolen-  
tibus ex animo.  
Horat. de art.  
Poet.

*ficat, quasi in hoc ipsum profectus*, chief or skilful mourners. These had *venales lachrymas*, they made a trade of their tears, making a greater howling and noise than real mourners did, as *Horace* testifies. From the Heathen this custome came to *Rome* also, where for money, the vilest of men shall have our-side mourners more than a good many. All kinde of hypocrisie is odious to God, but this is gross hypocrisie to make a great howling when there is no reality. It is only *vox, clamor, ululatus, & praterca nihil*. The Prophet therefore doth not approve of these hypocritical howlings, and artificial lamentations to get money, but onely shews that their sorrow should bee so great that it should need helpe to express it.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *When the word cannot mend a people, then comes judgements and ends them.*

First, God hews men down by the sword of the Spirit, *Hos.* 6.5. and then cuts them off by an enemies sword. This is Gods usual method, as hath been experienced in all ages. When men will not hearken to the voice of Gods messengers, it is a certain sign that God intends to destroy them, *1 Sam.* 2.25. *2 Chron.* 25.20. *Prov.* 29.1.

2 *Obf. Where sin goes before, there sorrow follows.*

We read before of this peoples Idolatry, bribery, cruelty; now comes weeping, wailing, lamentation, &c. Wicked mens mirth ends in mourning. See more on *Amos* 8.3.

## VERSE 17.

*And in all Vineyards shall be wailing, for I will pass thorow thee, saith the Lord.*

THESE *Israelites* boasted much that God was with them and he would never leave them who were his Covenant-people. The Prophet tells them that God would abide no longer with them, but would now pass thorow them in wrath; and not only the Citizens and Husbandmen, but even the Vintners also should mourn for the spoyl that should be made among

among them. In the time of Vintage there was wont to be great mirth and jollity, *Psal. 4. 7.* they sung merrily, and did shout for joy, *Isa. 16. 10. Jer. 35. 30.* yea but their sins had marred their mirth, so that now they shall have weeping instead of singing. *In all Vineyards shall be mourning.* All had sinned, and now all shall suffer.

2 Here is the reason of their mourning, viz. because the Lord will pass thorow them, he will not dwell, nor abide amongst them in love and favour as they vainly fancied, but he would pass thorow them like an enemy, and execute justice on them, *Isa. 27. 4.* The Prophet seems to allude to the Lords passing thorow Egypt when he sent an Angel to smite all the first-born thereof, and thereby filled every house with wailing and lamentation, *Exod. 11. 4. and 12. 12.* so I will pass thorow you with plagues, and will cause the destroying enemy to pass thorow all your land, saith the Lord.

*Verbum transeo,  
cum de Deo di-  
citur, semper  
plagas & ad-  
versa denotat.  
Hieron.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 Sin incenseth God against a people:

And makes him pass thorow them in wrath, like lightning, doing general execution upon them, terribly, suddenly, irresistibly. But of this before on vers. 6.

2 Obs. Generality of sin, brings generality of plagues.

Citizens, Husbandmen, Vintners, all had sinned, and now weeping and wailing shall be amongst them all. But of this see *Amos 6. ult.*

## VERSE 18.

Wo unto you that desire the day of the Lord, to what end is it for you? the day of the Lord is darkness, and not light.

WE are now come to the third part of this Chapter, where the Prophet inveyes against two sorts of sinners. The first are mockers and deriders of the Prophets threatenings. The second are such as trusted in their Ceremonies and Sacrifices, *Vers. 21, 22, 23.*

In the precedent Verse the Prophet had told them that the Lord

Lord

Lord would pass thorow them in wrath, these impudent sinners in a taunting, sarcastical way ask the Prophet when this would be, *q.d.* You Prophets tell us of a dark and dismal day, a day of wrath and trouble which will come upon us, but we see nothing comes; if God be in earnest let him make speed and come when he will, we fear neither him nor thy threatnings; nor doe we beleieve that ever such a day will come, or if it do come, yet it will not be such a dreadful day as you speak of; for God will not forsake his people which he hath spared so long from destruction.

Thus these desperate Atheists being wholly drowned in security, sensuality, and carnal delights, scoff at the Threatnings, and jest at Gods judgements, neither fearing the one, nor expecting the other, but esteeming the words of the Prophet as wind and his comminations as a vain mockery.

To these Flouters at the Threatnings and mockers at the Lords long-suffering, the Prophet answers, *We to you that desire the day of the Lord*, it will come too soon upon you without wishing for; did you but know the terror of it, you would never desire it. *To what end is it for you thus to speak?* Did you but know what kinde of day it is that is hastning on you, you would not so much desire it, you will think it comes too soon when it comes (the Devils thought so, *Matth 8.19.*) when God comes he will come as an armed enemy against you to your utter destruction; so that you have great cause to fear, and by repentance to prevent, rather than to desire that day; yet these hypocrites either as conceited of their own innocency, and confiding in their priviledges, desired this day; or else in mockery and scorn, they cry, When will that day come, which *Amos* so much talks of, we would fain see it. So you shall (saith the Prophet) time enough to your sorrow; *For it is a day of darkness, and not of light*; and therefore woe be to you that thus scoffingly desire the day of the Lord, you will finde it no jesting matter when it comes, it will be a dark and dismal day to you, though now you make your selves merry with it.

*By a day of darkness* here is meant, the time in which God would destroy the Kingdome of Israel, according as the Prophets had fore-told. *Allegorically* and allusively this is true of the day of Judgement, it will be a day of darkness and terror to all wicked men; but *literally*, this day of darkness and

and not of light, that is, this day of exceeding darkness (as the Hebrew Idiom imports) as we may ſee *Amos 9.4. I will ſet mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good.* The denial of the contrary hath a great emphasis in it, *9.4. I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but no good.* So here, *It ſhall be a day of darkness, and not of light;* that is, it ſhall be a very dark and diſmal day in which they ſhall finde no light of comfort from the Lord, but wrath ſhall come upon them to the utmoſt. In that day the Lord will exert his power in executing his vengeance on the Kingdome of *Iſrael* for all their Idolatry, Apoſtacy, Security, Hypocriſie, &c. The various and inevitable calamities of this day, are elegantly ſet forth in the next verſe, where the Prophet ſhews how the judgements of God ſhould beſet them round, ſo that if they eſcaped from one evil, yet another ſhould apprehend them, and if they fled from a Lion, yet a Bear (which is more ſavage) ſhould devour them.

It is uſual in Scripture to call a day of *Adverſity*, miſery and diſtreſs, by the name of *Darkneſs*, as *Job 30.16. and 23.17. and 30.26. Iſa. 5.30. and 21.12. Joel 2.2. Zeph. 1.14. to 18.* Hence the doleful condition of the damned is called utter darkneſs. As *light* ſignifies proſperity, joy and comfort, *Hoſ. 8.16. Job 18.6. and 38.15. Pſal. 97.11. and 112.4.* So *darkneſs* ſignifies calamity and ſorrow, as I have ſhewed on *Amos 8.9.*

*Queſt.* But why doth the Prophet denounce a *Woe* againſt thoſe that deſire the day of the Lord, when it is the earneſt deſire of the Saints in Scripture that the day of the Lord would come, and they daily pray, *Thy Kingdome come*, and it is made a kinde of a Periphras of a beleever, that he is one that longs for the day of the Lord, *2 Tim. 4.8.*

*Anſw.* We muſt diſtinguiſh, 1 Of dayes; 2 Of perſons. 1 There is a double day of Judgement; 1 There is a day of temporal judgement when the Lord ariſeth to execute judgement upon the heads of incorrigible finners, ſuch as the old world, *Sodom, Jeruſalem*; and theſe dayes have in them a glimpe and ſhadow of that great day of the Lord, and therefore they are called a day of blackneſs, and darkneſs, a great and terrible day which none can abide, when the earth ſhall tremble, and the Sun and Moon be dark, and the

Satan withdraw their light, *Job 1. 2. 10. 11.* All these hyperbolical termes set forth the dreadful desolation which should fall upon the wicked in this life. But this is not that day which the Saints desire.

The day which the godly so much desire, and long for it, that great and general day of Judgement, that day of their full Redemption when they shall enjoy both in body and soul full communion with Christ their head.

2 We must distinguish of persons, some are beleivers and some are unbelievers, and hypocrites; the Prophet speaks not here of beleivers, but of self-conceited hypocrites, who being puffed up with high conceits of their own innocency, do imagine that God would acquit them, though the Prophets condemned them, they conceived that would God deal more gently with them, than those harsh, plain-dealing Prophets, and would not judge them so bad as they had reported them to be. But we need alas to you that thus desire the day of the Lord! for if our day be terrible, how terrible will the day of the Lord be to it, if you cannot bear our words, how will you endure his heavy hands? you think us Lions, and therefore you flye from our day, but the day of the Lord will be as a Bear, which will chase and torment you worse.

The summe of all is this, *Job 10. you are exceedingly and scornfully mock at the sayings of the dark, and disdain day which is coming on you, scornfully asking when will it come? assure your selves it will come sooner though it be your sorrow; you shall finde that it is not a day of mirth and pleasure, but of sorrow and trouble, when you shall flye from our danger, and when you shall as if one should flye from a Lion, and a Bear should overtake him.*

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1 In all ages there have been some prophane mockers and deriders of Gods judgements.

Thus it was in the Prophet times, when they told the wicked of the burden of the Lord, that is of Gods wrath which should light upon them in some heavy judgements for their sins, *Isa 13. 1. and 24. 1.* they usually mocked them for their pains, saying, What is the burden of the Lord, and when will it come? you have of us told us of it, but as we do not feel it, so we do not beleieve it, and therefore live in single traffic that we may see it. Such also saying, *Job 12. 14. The*

phet

phet tells them of a night of misery that was coming on them, but those accursed Edomites tauntingly ask, Watchman, what of the night? *Isa. 21. 11, 12. q. d. You talk much of a night of horror and desolation, of war and confusion, but when will it come? Oh saith the Prophet, the morning comes, and also the night; you have had a morning of prosperity, assure your selves you shall also have a night of adversity, and therefore if you will enquire of the Lord by me his Watchman, do it seriously, and not sarcastically, returning and come to God with speed.*

Thus some conceive that the Prophet recites the fables of prophane ones, when he says, *Precept must be upon precept, and line upon line: Tisat luisaph, Kas liskaf*, the very tone and found of the words carrieth a jeer in them, *Isa. 28. 10.* Peter and Jude both foretell us, what we have found too true in our own dayes, *Thus in the last dayes there should be mockers, which should walk after their own ungodly lusts, 2 Pet. 3. 3. 4. Jude 18.* Of old they mocked at the particular dayes of Judgement which the Prophets threatned them withall, but in the last dayes they will mock at the general day of Judgement, saying, *Where is the promise of his coming? since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the world.* Because Judgement is not presently executed on the heads of wicked men, therefore they set their mouths against heaven, and blasphem the most High.

2 *Obf. God will not bear with scorner.*

When sinners are come to that height of Impudency and prophaneness, that they jeer at Judgements, and mock at Gods Messengers, then shall their bonds be made strong, and their sorrows multiplied, *Isa. 28. 14, 15, 16, 17. 22. 2 Chron. 36. 16. Prov. 3. 3, 4. Jer. 23. 33, 34. Ezech. 9. 5, 6. and 12. 22. to 28.* The day of the Lord, especially that last day will be a dreadful, and a dismal day to such; they will not be able then to stand in the Judgement, *Psal. 135.* and therefore the Apostle asks, *Where shall the ungodly and sinner appear?* *1 Pet. 4. 18.* the Apostles interrogation is not dubitative, but assertive, they shall appear no where with comfort, nor with confidence, especially in three dayes.

1 In a day of public calamity, when Sword, Plague, Famine comes, then the hearts of the wicked shall fail, when they shall howl upon their beds for the loss of their creature-

Against mock-  
ers, see Mr.  
Jenkin on Jude  
18. and Mr.  
Cawdry his Ser.  
on Prov. 29. 8.  
preached be-  
fore the House  
of Com. 1643.



comforts, and shall have a trembling heart, failing eyes, and sorrow of minde, *Deut. 28. 65.* As the righteous that prepare for troubles, shall rejoyce in the midst of them, *Job 5. 12. Hab 3. 17.* so the wicked shall be overwhelmed with amazement and horreur, and shall rage like wilde Bulls in a net, *Isa. 51. 20.*

ὁ δὲ ΣΕΒΑΤΩ  
ΠΟΝΤΩΝ ΤΩΝ  
ΦΟΒΕΡΩΝ ΦΟ-  
ΒΕΡΟΤΑΤΟΝ.  
*Aristot.*

2 The day of death is a dismal day to the wicked, even the King of Terrors, *Job 18. 14.* the most terrible of all terribles said *Aristotle* when he came to dye. The thoughts of it will make a *Belshazzars* knees to knock one against another for fear.

3 But specially that great day of the Lord, when he shall come as a Thief in the night, suddenly, terribly, and unexpectedly upon the wicked of the world, *1 Thess. 5. 2, 3. 2 Pet. 3. 10.* that will be a dark and terrible day to them, when even the Kings and Captains of the earth shall cry to hills and mountains to hide them, *Rev. 6. 16, 17.*

Where then will those blasphemers of our time appear that scoff at Gods Threatnings, and desire their own damnation, which the Devils themselves dare not do, for *they believe and tremble?* Who are these that provoke the Lord to anger? are they stronger than he? who can abide his wrath, or the thunder of his power? *Job 26. ult.* Shall the whelp challenge the Lion, the clay its Potter, or the creature its Creator? *Let the pastors strive with the pastors of the earth, but not to him that striveth with his Maker, Isa. 45. 9.* To such as these the day of the Lord will be darkness, and not light, i.e. full of perplexity and misery, leaving them void of comfort or counsel.

*Hant reprobi,  
& volupta-  
tum suarum de-  
sideria multa  
iniquitate con-  
sumunt, atque eo temporaria flagella non sentiant, quo aeterna eos supplicia expectant. Aug.  
in Psal. 93. 2d.*

#### VERSE 19:

*As if a man did flye from a Lion, and a Bear met him, or went into the house, and leaned his hand upon the wall, and a Serpent bit him.*

**T**His people still dreamed of impunity, and because the Lord bare long with them, therefore they concluded he would never come; or if he did, they would shift for themselves, and if troubles were in one place they would flye to another;

another but the Prophet tells them, that these shifts would not avail them in the day of Gods wrath, for all places should be full of snares and dangers, so that there should be no safety at home or abroad; for God would multiply evils upon them. So that if they escaped one, yet another should apprehend them; as if a man being in the Field or Wood should fly from a Lion, and a furious Bear should meet him, or flying from a Bear, a Serpent should bite him. It is a kinde of *Gradation*, where the speech riseth, and the Prophet shews that if they escaped one evil, yet they should fall into a worse. To have a Lion pursue a man is very dangerous, but to fall into the mouth of an hungry Bear that is worse, but to escape both, and flying into an house for shelter and succour, and laying his hand upon the wall to ease and uphold himself, to have a Serpent sting him there where he looked for most security, this is worst of all. The Lion is a more noble, generous creature, it spares a yeelding prey, and seizeth not on dead carcases; but the Bear spares none, no not the dead. The two and forty children which mocked *Elisha* were torn in peeces, not by Lions, but by two shee-bears, 2 *King*. 2. 24. which are more savage and cruel. Hence comes the Proverb, *Lionem morientibus fugiens incidit in Ursum*, he fled from a Lion, and fell into the mouth of a Bear, that is, he fled from one danger, and fell into a worse. There is no creature more fierce and fell than a Bear, especially when she is robbed of her Whelps, and therefore when the Lord threatens to come against Ephraim in a dreadful manner, he tells them he will come against them as a strong Lion, as a subtil Leopard, yea as a raging Bear that is robbed of her whelps, 2 *Hos*. 13. 7, 8. The like expressions are frequent in Scripture, 2 *Sam*. 17. 8. *Prov*. 27. 12. *Lana*. 3. 10. These hypocrites conceited that changes would ease them, if the Lion were but dead, oh then they should be quiet. No (saith the Prophet) a Bear shall meet you. Oh but if the Bear were but dead, then we should have rest, no (saith the Prophet) a Serpent shall bite you. These are a proverbial kinde of speech, by which is set forth the great danger which should encompass *Israel*, no place should be free, but they should be set round, so that when they thought to fly from one trouble, they should fall into a worse; and whilst they shunned the *Scylla* of one calamity, they should fall into the *Charybdis*.

fall into the *Clutches* of another. If they went abroad, there were Lions and Bears to devour them; If they staid at home, there were Serpents and Snakes that lay lurking in holes and walls that should bite them, and sting them to death. Thus when the day of the Lord should come, they should not be able to escape, but flying from one cruel enemy, they should fall into the hands of a worse, one misery should follow in the neck of another until they were quite consumed.

By a *Lion* here some understand *Tiglathpileser* King of *Assyria*, who formerly oppressed *Israel*, and by a *Bear*, *Salmanser* a latter King of *Assyria*, which dealt more sharply and severely with *Israel*, and who at last proved a stinging *Serpent* to them, when he besieged and ransacked *Samaria*, and took all *Israel* captive. To this some conceive the Prophet *Hosea* alludes, *Hos. 13. 7, 8*. The Lord had been as a tender Nurse unto this people, he brought them out of *Egypt* into *Canaan*, chose them for his own peculiar above all the people of the world, and gave them the dews of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, as you may see, *Deut. 32. 10.* to 15. but they abusing those mercies to the dishonour of that God that gave them, he now resolves to meet them no more like a Father to embrace them, but like a *Lion* to tear them, like a *Bear* to devour them, and like a *Serpent* to sting them to death.

## OBSERVATIONS.

*1 Thyl. 5. 3.*

*1 There is no escaping when God pursues.*

Neither fields nor houses can shelter us if he be against us. Let men flye up to heaven, or dig into hell, or hide themselves in the bottome of the sea, yet there Godseye doth see them, and his hand will finde them out; as I have shewed at large on *Amos 9. 2, 3, 4*. Let *Jonah* flye to sea, and God will meet him there with a tempest, *Jonah 1. 3, 4*. If men escape the paw of the *Lion*, yet the *Bear* and the *Serpent* shall meet them. God wants not rods to chastise a disobedient people. He hath variety in store, and if one will not do, another shall. He will send evil upon evil, loss upon loss, and enemy upon enemy, until he hath quite destroyed us. Neither swiftness, strength, nor courage can save us in a day of wrath, *Amos 2.*

24, 25, 26. Men flye from an iron bow, yet a bow of steel shall smite them thorow, Job 20. 24. and if they get out of a pit, they shall fall into a snare that shall hold them fast, Isa 24. 17, 18. Jer 48. 44. and if they flye seven wayes, yea seven hundred wayes before their enemies, yet they shall not escape, for God will send a storm as many wayes after them, and if they escape one danger, yet another shall arrest them. Dent. 28. 27. Wicked men think to escape by shifting, e. g. when they be in trouble of conscience then they desire to dye, thinking thereby to free themselves from misery by running into eternal misery. So when Gods ministers by the preaching of the word do startle people, they thinke that God would deal more gently with them, and therefore they appeal to him; now what is this but to flye out of the smoak into the fire, and to avoid a lesser, to run into a greater mischief?

## VERSE 20.

*Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness, and not light?  
Even very dark, and no brightness in it?*

**T**HE Prophet having showed this people the terror, and unavoidableness of that great day of the Lord which was coming upon them for their sin, concludes all with this sharp and sacred Epiphonema; *In the day of the Lord, darkness, and not light?*

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *q. d. To what end do you desire this dreadful day of the Lord? Do you not know that it will be a dark and dismal day, when you shall lose your lives and liberties, your goods and your relations? when your joy shall be turned into sorrow, your prosperity into adversity, and your light into the shadow of death? It is not the more for such obstinate sinners as you, but that the day of the Lord shall be a day of darkness and light on our face, for the Lord will come as an armed army against you, who have been so long open enemies to him.*

To assure them of the truth of what he speaks, he doubles it, *It shall be a day of darkness, and not light, q. d. Take it to you, and be at a truth that you shall have all sorts and degrees of darkness, although you will shut your eyes and*

*Epitasis est in  
affirmatione  
cum negatione  
contrarii.*

inward, corporal and spiritual darkness and misery. See more  
verf. 18.

3 To make the words more weighty and emphatical, there  
is added a denial of the contrary to the Affirmation, which is  
an usual Hebraism, and intends the speech. So *Iſa. 38. 11.*  
*Thou shalt dye, and not live, i.e. thou shalt surely dye.* So  
*Ezek. 18. 21.* *He shall live, and not dye, i.e. he shall surely*  
*live.* So *Joh. 1. 20.* he confessed and denied not, i.e. he  
plainly and openly confessed that he was not the Christ; so it  
shall be a *day of darkness, and no light*, or brightness in it, that  
is, it shall be a very calamitous day, which will bring with it  
many evils, but no good; much sorrow, but no joy; much  
darkness, but no light of comfort, ease, direction, or good  
counsel.

## OBSERVATIONS.

**A** dark and doleful day will certainly and suddenly seize  
upon secure and obdurate sinners.

Therefore the Prophet doubles and trebles it, saying, *The  
day of the Lord will be darkness, and not light*; then he asks the  
question, and doubles the Interrogation, and all to assure  
them of the truth of what he spake, and to hasten their Re-  
pentance. The darkness of sin brought upon them darkness  
of sorrow, and provoked the Lord to take away his corn and  
wine, and oyl, and to strip them naked, as in the day when  
they were born. Since they would not serve him with glad-  
ness of heart in the abundance of all things; now they should  
serve the *Assyrian* in woe and misery, and in the want of all  
things, *Deut. 28. 47, 48.*

A good man if he fall into trouble, yet he riseth again, but  
the wicked shall fall, and never rise more, *Prov. 24. 16.* If a  
good man sit in darkness, yet the Lord will be a light unto  
him, *Pſal. 97. 11.* *Micah 7. 8.* and turn all to his good in the  
conclusion. As the wicked man in the fulness of his sufficiency  
is in straits, *Job 20. 22.* So the good man in the fulness of  
straits hath an All-sufficiency of comfort, so that he cannot  
but say, the Lord hath done all things well; and it is good for  
him that ever the Lord afflicted him; yea that great and ter-  
rible day of the Lord, when Christ shall come in his glory to  
judge

judge the world, shall be a day of joy and refreshing to all the Saints, *Pf. 98. 4. to 9. Luke 21. 28.* But to the wicked, who have Christ the Judge for their enemy, how dark and dreadful will all his dayes of Judgement be? When he shall lay his Vindictive hand upon them here, how full of despondency and despair will they be, when they shall be totally forsaken of all their hopes and comforts? So that if they look *upward*, God is against them; if *downward*, Hell and the Grave wait for them; if *inward*, a guilty Conscience accuseth them; if *outward*, all the Creatures are ready as so many Serjeants to arrest them, on the behalf of their Lord and Master. Thus wee see how the Day of the Lord will be darkness, and no light nor brightness in it to the wicked.

## VERSE 21, 22, 23.

*I hate and despise your feast-dayes, and I will not smell in your solemn assemblies.*

*Though yee offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meut-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.*

*Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Viols.*

**W**EE are now come to the Fourth and last part of this Chapter, which contains,

1 A Reproof. 2. A Commination of these hypocritical *Israelites*, who confided in their Services, and Sacrifices, in their Festivals and Songs, conceiting that the bare performance of those external Rites (though separated from internal obedience) were highly pleasing unto God; and that he would never destroy a People that served him as they did. This their folly the Prophet confutes in the following Verses, where he tells them, that all their services were odious unto God, and so farre from appeasing him, that they incensed him the more against them; and that because they were unsound

For { Man.  
Matter.  
Manner.

G g

I The



1 The *Sacrificers* were grand Apostates and Idolaters. They rested in the work done, and in their Ceremonious observances, and bodily worship, devoyd of all faith or true obedience, and so became abominable to God.

2 They failed in the *Matter* of their Worship, it was not of Divine institution, but of their owne invention, and therefore it is so oft Emphatically called, *yours*. I hate *your feasts*. They went directly contrary to Gods command, for he commanded them to worship at *Jerusalem*, in his Temple there, but they left the Temple, and went a whoring after Calves and Idols at *Bethel*, *Gilgal*, *Dan*, and *Beersheba*. Thus they changed the place of Gods Worship, 1 *King*. 12. 29. then they changed the *time*, vers. 31. and the *Priests*, vers. 31, 32. no wonder then if God reject their services.

3 They failed in the *Manner*, they should have performed all these duties singly and sincerely, in obedience to Gods command, but they meerly sought themselves in all they did, hypocritically resting in their external observations of Feasts and Sacrifices, of Songs and Musick in their Temples, thinking by this means to expiate their sins. In this Verse therefore we have a Prolepsis, or preventing and anticipating of an Objection, whereas they boasted that they were the people of God, and did service to him. To this the Prophet brings in the Lord, saying, I hate and abhor your Services, since they come from such wicked persons, who are my profest enemies, and what you doe, hath no foundation in my Word, but is a meer will-worship of your owne inventing.

In this and the two next Verses we have,

1 The particulars of their worship, they had	{	1 Feastivals,	{ Sabbaths.
		as	{ New-Moons.
			{ Solemn Assemblies.
	{	2 Sacrifices,	{ Burnt-offerings.
		as	{ Meate-offerings.
			{ Peace-offerings.
	{	3 Singing,	{ 1 Vocal.
			{ 2 Instrumental.

- 2 Here is Gods abhorrency  
of all these Services, exprest in  
variety of words, as
- 1 I hate them.
  - 2 I abhor them.
  - 3 I will not smel them.
  - 4 I will not accept them.
  - 5 I will not regard them.
  - 6 Away with them.

- 3 Here is the reason of this  
abhorrency, and that is be-  
cause they are,
- 1 Your Feasts.
  - 2 Your Sacrifices.
  - 3 Your Songs.

They are none of mine, either for matter or manner, but they are of your owne inventing and appointing, and therefore I abhor them.

*I hate, I despise your Feast-days*; or, I hate and reject your Feasts with much disdain, as vile and contemptible things, you think you highly please me with them, and think to pacifie me by them, but your thoughts and mine differ much, for I tell you plainly, I hate and abhor both your persons and performances; till you mend your manners, and execute Justice and Righteousness in the earth, all you doe is odious to me, and I look upon it with the greatest displicency imaginable; you think that I should delight in your solemnities as you doe, but my stomach loathes them, and turns at every dish and duty. The Stomack closeth with wholesome food and turns to it, but that which is unwholsome the stomach turns at the very sight and sent of it. When people feast sincerely, God useth (in a sense) to feast with them, and their wine cheers him, *Judg. 9. 13.* it is an hyperbolical speech, and imports, that God is delighted with the sacrifices of his Servants, and highly approves of their obedience in them. But the hypocrisie of these *Israelites*, like Coloquintida in the pot, spoyled their feasts, and made the Lord to loathe them, as we doe meat which is burthensome to the stomach, which makes us sick till we have rid our stomachs of it; as Christ threatned to doe with luke-warm *Laodicea*, Rev. 3. 16. *I hate, I despise*, the doubling of the word is emphatical, and shewes the greatness of Gods indignation against them for their hypocrisie, for of all sins God most abhors that, as being most directly opposite to his Nature, who is a God of Truth and Righteousness. I hate your feasts, or feastival Sacrifices, the word

Chaggechen,  
festivitates ve-  
stras, à chagga,  
saltare, festum  
celebrare, hinc  
chag, dies festus,  
& latius in quo  
homines edunt,  
bibunt & sal-  
tant, & syne-  
dochice hostia  
que duc festo  
offerebatur.

which we render *Feasts*, signifies both a Feast, and the Sacrifices which were offered on those Feast-days. Hence some render it, *I hate your sacrifices*, so the word is used, *Exod. 23. 18. Ps. 118. 27. Isa. 29. 1. The fat of my feast*, i. e. of the Lamb which was sacrificed at my Feast, *shall not be kept until the morning*; so that it imports, that God hated both the feasts, and the sacrifices which they offered at those feasts.

But our reading is good, *I hate your Feasts*, for the despising of their Sacrifices follows in the next verse. The *Jews* had many Feasts, they had Sabbaths, New Moons, the Feast of Tabernacles, Pentecost, Trumpets, and the Jubilee. But the Lord tells them, *That he will not smell in their solemn assemblies*. It is a Meiosis, q. d. I greatly loathe them; meet as oft as you will, but I will not meet you there, nor once smell in your assemblies. To smell a sweet savour, signifies Gods favourable acceptation and approbation; thus when *Noah* offered a Burnt-offering to the Lord, it is said, the Lord smelt a sweet savour which pleased him well, *Gen. 8. 21. so Levit. 26. 31.*

in diebus inter-  
dicti vestris.  
Hab.

*I will not smell in your days of restraint or prohibition*, so the words are in the fountain; that is, I delight not in your Festival days, wherein people are restrained and prohibited their ordinary labours, *Levit. 23. 7, 8, 36. Joel 1. 14.* when they offered sacrifice in a right manner, then God esteemed them as a sweet smelling sacrifice, *Exod. 29. 18. Levit. 1. 9, 13, 17. Ezek. 20. 40.* they were very grateful and acceptable to him, being types of Christ, in whom he is well pleased. The burning of the Sacrifice in it self yeilded no such sweet smell, but the faith and obedience of the person being in Christ, this made it so delightful to God.

The people when they brought their Offerings, they brought Frankincense with them, to burn for a sweet savour to the Lord, *Exod. 30. 34. Levit. 2. 1, 2. & 16. 12. Numb. 16. 14. Deut. 33. 10. Psal. 66. 15. Ezek. 16. 18.* the better to represent the sweet odours of our Saviours Sacrifice, *Ephes. 5. 2.* But these Formalists resting in the bare doing of the work without faith and obedience, their sweetest incense was as noysome dung in the nostrils of God, *Isa. 1. 13. Mal. 2. 3.* this may be more truly said of all Popish Incensing in their idolatrous Mass.

Obj.

Obj. But did not the Lord institute and appoint Sacrifices, how then is he said to hate them?

A. It is true, the Lord for good ends did command them, as 1. To keep up the publick assemblies of the faithful in their meetings to serve the Lord, which else would quickly have decayed. 2. To mind them of Christ and his Sacrifice, of which these were shadows. 3. Hereby they made an open confession of their faith to the world, testifying what God they served, and in whom they believed. 4. Hereby they testified their thankfulness for mercies received. 5. They served for the maintenance of the Ministry, and by consequence to further the Worship of God, 1 Cor. 9. 13.

See Michas Mellif. Theolog. Part 3. p. 230 &c.

The Lord therefore doth not simply condemn Sacrifices, and religious services, but the formal and hypocritical performance of them, when men fail both in man, matter, and manner, as these did. So that when the Scripture seems to condemn Sacrifices, and sayes, *I require not Sacrifices*; this must not be taken *Absolutely*, but *comparatively*, q. d. It is not so much the outward sacrifice, as the sacrifice of an humble and contrite heart which God requires, *Psal.* 51. 16, 17. so *Matth.* 9. 13. *I will have mercy and not sacrifice*, i. e. mercy rather than sacrifice. God requires both inward and outward obedience, but that which he chiefly delights in, is the inward.

Loquitur non ἀπλῶς, sed κατὰ τὴν ἑξουσίαν, q. d. secundum quid. See Dr. Gouge on Heb. 10. 5. ff. 16 p. 434. & M. Patricius on Micah 6. 8. See my School- Guard, Rule 31

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 External Sacrifices, and Services separated from internal obedience, are odious to God.

Many think they highly please him by such hypocritical, outside services, when they never more displease him. Of the hypocritical *Jews* (who did yet partake of the Sacraments) it is said, that with many of them God was not well pleased, i. e. he was highly displeased. It is a *Meiosis*, 1 Cor. 10. 5. *Calv.* n. Circumcision without obedience, is uncircumcision, *Rom.* 2.

25, 26.

There is scarce any sin in all the Scripture that hath harder terms given it than this. See *Isa.* 1. 11. to 16. & 57. 6. & 58. See D. Edmon 2. & c. *Prov.* 7. 14, 15. *Jer.* 6. 20. & 7. 8, 9, 10, 11. & 11. on *Isa.* 58. 2. 13. *Ezek.* 20. 28, 39. *Hos.* 8. 13. *Micah.* 6. 6, 7, 8. *Mal.* 1. 1. p. 16. folio. 10. see what an heap of disliking expressions are here.

G g 3

1 To

- 1 To what purpose are your Sacrifices ?
- 2 I delight not in them.
- 3 Who required them at your hands?
- 4 Bring no more vain Oblations.
- 5 They are an abomination to me.
- 6 Your Feasts I cannot away with.
- 7 They are iniquity.
- 8 My soul hates them.
- 9 They are a trouble to me.
- 10 I am weary of them.
- 11 I will hide mine eyes from you.
- 12 I will not hear your Prayers.

See more be-  
fore on Amos  
4. 4. & 5. 5.  
and in my  
Com. on 2 Tim.  
3. 5.

All their Sacrifices were as the offering of a Dogge, or a Swine, in Sacrifice, which had been a hainous crime in the time of the Law; yea the Lord accounts it as Idolatry and Murder, *Isa.* 66. 3. It is to no purpose for *Israel* to cry, My God we know thee, unless they doe the thing that is good, *Hof.* 8. 2, 3. The Scribes and Pharisees went farre in externals. Hence we read of the strict, accurat, exquisite Sect of the Pharisees, *Acts* 26. 5. but our righteousness must exceed theirs. It is obedience that God preferres before all the Sacrifices in the world, *Psal.* 50. 8, 9, 14, 25. & 51. 16, 17. hence *Samuel* tells *Saul*, that obedience is better than sacrifice, *1 Sam.* 15.

See this Point  
fully and lear-  
nedly proved,  
by Mr. Patrick  
on Micah 6. 8.  
14. 98 to 131.  
and in his  
Jewish Hypoc.  
ch. 16 p. 247.  
*Noli ex-rin-  
scens pecus, au-  
rum, aviem  
querere, habes  
in te quod oc-  
cidat. Si te ex-  
cessum feceris,  
longinquabitur*

à te, si te humiliaveris, propinquabis ad te. Aug. Adverbia apud Deum prevalent verbis, ut in naturalibus forma est decentior materiâ; sic in moralibus plus commendatur modus, quàm affectus. Luther.

22. it is more Spiritual, and so more pleasing to God. A wicked man may sacrifice a Beast, but a good man offers himself in sacrifice, *Rom.* 12. 1. now the more difficult the service, the more acceptable it is to God, and all good men. A zealous *David* loves not cheap, out-side services, he will not offer to his God of that which cost him nothing; the service which God delights in, is spiritual service, *Joh.* 4. 23, 24. and this Gods servants delight to give him, *Rom.* 1. 9. As they desire that God should not put them off with shewes and shadowes, and shelles of duties; so they desire not to serve him by halves, but to doe what they doe for him, and to him, with all their hearts, and with all their might. *Luther* was wont to say, that God preferred Adverbs before Adjectives, and loved bene-

better than *bonum*; he looks to the manner as well as the matter of our services. This may convince any sober man, that the *Popish Religion* is a false religion, because it is such a Ceremonious, out-side religion; all for Bowing, Ringing, Singing, Saying, Knocking, and the traditions of men: and in these out-side performances they exceed the godly; as an Harlot in painting and outward attire may excel an honest Woman; but the Kings Daughter hath an internal excellency, she is all glorious within, being adorned with all the graces of the Spirit, *Pfal. 45. 13.*

VERSE 22.

*Though yee offer me Burnt-offerings, and your Meat-offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I regard the Peace-offerings of your fat beasts.*

THIS people confided much in their hypocritical Services, and multiplicity of Burnt-offerings, Meat-offerings, Peace-offerings, &c. they thought by the bare performance of these duties to pacifie Gods wrath against them for their sins. The Prophet therefore goes on still to convince them of this their folly, and tells them plainly, that God neither regarded them, nor their Sacrifices.

In the time of the Law we read of divers Oblations and Sacrifices, amongst the rest we have three in the text, See Binschius Mellific. Theolog. Part 3. p. 239 &c.

- 1 Burnt-offerings.
- 2 Meat-offerings.
- 3 Peace-offerings.

1 The *Burnt-offering*, was one of the most excellent, and the choicest of all the Sacrifices for sin, and the most acceptable to God; it is called an *Holocaust*, or whole Burnt-offering, *Ab ôlac*, because it was wholly consumed by fire, there was no part *totus, & uol.* reserved for the Priest, or for the People, but all was burnt *εἶος, ere.* and offered up to God. It hath its name from *ascending*, *be-mindus*, cause by burning all in the fire, it went up in smoke and *Gasib, ascen-* pour. It was a daily sacrifice made by fire, *Numb. 18. 3. Le-* *vit. 1. 9. Job 1. 5. & 42. 8.* and was used both at ordinary *Holocaustum.* and extraordinary Feasts, It consisted either of Fowls as *Job 1. 5.* See Cayl on Turtles



See how it  
Typified Christ  
in D. *Gilda*,  
*Moses* unvail-  
ed. II. 32. p.  
116.

Turtles and Pigeons, for the poorer sort, *Levit. 1. 14.* or  
else of Lambs, Rams, Goats, and Bulls, &c. for the richer  
sort. The end of it was to make an atonement for Sinners,  
*Levit. 1. 4.*

Obj. *But the burning of a Beast is a poor unsavoury thing, and  
unfit to represent so great a mercy.*

Ans. We must not look upon Gods Ordinances with car-  
nal, but spiritual eyes, else to an eye of sense, Circumcision  
( which was an honourable seal of the Covenant ) would  
seem contemptible and dishonourable, yea a bloody and a  
cruel thing, as it did to carnal *Ziporah*, *Exod. 4. 25.*

So in our Sacraments, how contemptible to a carnal eye,  
is the sprinkling of a little water, a bit of Bread, or a sup of  
Wine, but consider them as Gods Ordinances, which he hath  
ordained, to seal and assure us of our reconciliation with him  
in the Blood of Christ, and so they are weighty matters. A lit-  
tle Wax and Paper are small matters to look upon, yet they  
may be a means to convey matters of great worth unto us.

2 *Meat-offerings*, *Minchah*, in a large sense is taken for any  
gift, but here it is taken *strictly* for an Oblation made of fine  
flower, *Levit. 2. 1, 2. Num. 6. 17. & 15. 4. & 27. 39.*  
*2 Chron. 7. 7. Ezek. 43. 27.* it was alwayes joyned to the  
Burnt-offering or daily Sacrifice; only the voluntary Meat-  
offering was not.

The end of it was to acknowledge, that they had all their  
food and provision from the bounty and blessing of God.

3 *Peace-offerings*; These were Eucharistical for Mercies  
received, and resembled our sacrifices of Praise and Thank-  
giving, *Heb. 13. 5.*

It is called *Shelem*, because this sacrifice was offered for  
the peace, safety, and prosperity that they had already recei-  
ved, or should hereafter receive, either generally or particu-  
larly; and this they did either voluntarily of their owne ac-  
cord, or as bound by vow, *Lev. 7. 15. 1 Chron. 16. 1, 2. &  
2 Chron. 7. 7.* but the other Sacrifices were necessary and com-  
manded

2 Here is Gods detestation of all their Sacrifices; *I will  
not accept them, neither will I regard them, i. e. I abhor them;*  
yea though yee bring the *fairest* of your *Beasts*, I will not  
vouchsafe them a look. They were wont to feed their Oxen  
very

*Ainsworth* on  
*Levit. 2. 1.* sets  
down nine sorts  
of Meat-offer-  
ings.  
*Minchah*, pro-  
prio significat  
munus farina-  
rum, & erat  
accessio victim-  
ae, *Calvin.*  
See *Moses* un-  
vaild. II. 36.  
p. 129, &c.  
See Mr. *Jack-*  
*son* Annot on  
*Levit. 7. 15.*  
and *Moses* un-  
vaild. ch. 37  
p. 132.

very far, that to their Sacrifices might bee the more acceptable. But the Lord tells them, that since the persons that offered them were so lewd, and lean in obedience, that he took no pleasure in such sacrifices; and therefore he bids them desist till they had mended their manners, and reformed the abuses that reigned amongst them.

But here *Bellarmino* (that great *Achilles* of the Antichristian Cause) comes in with his Sophistry, and would prove from hence the inefficacy of the Sacrifices of the Old Testament. *Bellarmino de ref. sectu Sacram. lib. 2. cap. 14.*

But the Answer is easie. 1. Legal Sacrifices are to be considered, either *abstractly, absolutely, and simply* in themselves, and so the blood of Bullocks and Rams could not expiate sin; But secondly, consider them *Relatively, and Typically*, as relating to Christ, who was the Lambe slaine from the beginning of the world *Vernally*, though not *Actually*, Revel. 13. 8. and so they were of great weight, and worth; assuring beleevers that by the Blood of Christ all their sins were blotted out and pardoned.

2 We must distinguish of Sacrifices.

1 Some are commanded by God, and offered to him by beleevers, in a right manner, and these are highly pleasing unto God, and beneficial to beleevers; as we see in *Abel*, Heb. 11. 4. and *Levit. 5*. God never saith to the seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vain. The sincere services, and sacrifices of such, are a sweet smelling savour unto God.

2 There are Sacrifices which are meer Will-worship, offered up by wicked men, in a false manner, without faith; and of these *Amos* here speaks, and says, that their Sacrifices were odious unto God.

Now, let us see what Jesuitical and Sophistical arguing here is; 1. Because Sacrifices doe not expiate sins *per se*, therefore they doe not expiate sins *Relatively*, viz. by the merits of Christ typified by them. *Fallacia à d. et secundum quid, ad dictum simpliciter.*

2 Because God abhorres the sacrifices of wicked men, therefore he abhorres the sacrifices of all men. Now, who knowes not, that *A particulari ad Universale non valet argumentum*. Because some men are Sophisters, therefore all men are Sophisters; and because some men oppose the truth against light

(to get or keep a Cardinals Cap) *ergo* all men doe so, is a grois *Non sequitur*.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Wicked men may perform all the external duties of religion as well as good men.*

Doe the good man offer Burnt-offerings? so doe these. Doe he offer Meate-offerings, and Peace-offerings? so doe they. Yea, doe they offer the Fat? so did these. Cain offered Sacrifice as well as *Abel*, Gen. 4. 5. Doe the good man Fast, Pray, give Almes? &c. so did Scribes and Pharisees. Yea the Hypocrite may excel the child of God in externals, as hired mourners make a greater noyse than real ones.

See Dyke on  
the Heart, p. 29.  
& p. 111.

Let no man then rest in externals, and think because hee barely doth such duties, therefore he is in Gods favour, all these and more may be done by a Natural man. But let us sincerely live our Prayers, and live up to our Duties and Priviledges, so shall we doe more than any Hypocrites whatsoever.

2 *Obs. The Sacrifices and Services of wicked men though never so fat, and good for matter, yet as coming from them are odious unto God.*

If the person please not, nothing pleaseth; God had no respect to *Cain*, and therefore he rejected his Offering, Gen. 4. 5. The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, Prov. 15. 8. & 21. 27. the tree must be good before the fruit can be good. We should therefore labour for faith and repentance that our persons may please, and then all will be pleasing. The Lord had first respect to *Abel*, and then to his Offering, Gen. 4. 4. Though for matter the Sacrifices may be the same, yet when they come from a beleeving heart, they are farre more excellent and acceptable, Heb. 11. 4. *By faith Abel offered a more acceptable Sacrifice, than Cain.*

3 *Obs. The Services and Sacrifices which we offer unto God must be of the best.*

We must bring the finest flour, Levit. 2. 1. and the fattest of our flock, Exod. 29. 13. Levit. 3. 3. if the blind and the lame were abhorred of *Dauids* soul, how much more of Gods? he curseth such as bring such maimed sacrifices to him. We may

may not offer unto God of that which cost us nothing. But as he is the best of beings, so we must give him the best of our days, our youth; and the best of our services, thankfully acknowledging that all our fatness, riches, comforts, and prosperity comes from God. It is said of *Prometheus*, that himself did eat the flesh of his Sacrifice, but the skin and the bones he gave to *Jupiter*; even so deal too many with the Almighty, they keep the flesh and the fat to themselves; they spend their youth and health in their owne pastimes and pleasures, offering the skin and the bones of their dotage to God; If they have a Son amongst all their children that is weak and sickly, why set him to the Ministry. So in their Tythes and dues they keep the fat to themselves, and give the starvelling to their Ministers. The worst is thought too good for God, the worst Corn, the worst Calf, the worst Lamb, &c. his Ministers shall bee sure to have, yea it may bee none at all of many.

VERSE 23.

*Take thou away from me the noise of thy Songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy Votls.*

**T**he Prophet goes on in reprovving them for their hypocritical services, wherewith they thought to please and pacifie God. *Take away from me the noise (or multitude) of your Songs*; they contented not themselves with a song or two, but they had their multitudes of songs. Hypocrites that delight in toys and human inventions, and a Ceremonious, external, pompous worship, know no bounds, they spare for no cost or pains, but even tire out themselves in will-worship; morning, noon, night, midnight, all too little for Idols, but nothing for God, he is not in any of their thoughts. They placed a great part of their Religion in Singing, and Musick, and external services, they thought that God was like themselves, and would be pleased with such things as pleased them; and as Children are stilled with rattles, so they thought to pacifie God with their songs and melody.

But away with your Songs and Musick (saith God) they are a burden to me, you doe but tire your selves and me too.

to no purpose. Doe not think to please me with the Musical harmony of your formal devotions, whilst I bear and abhor the discordant noyse of your sins and enormities.

In the time of the Ceremonial Law God did indulge the *Jews* the use of many Musical Instruments in his Worship, which are now abolished (as I have proved at large on *Amos* 6. 5.) Vocal and Instrumental Musick was at that time a part of Gods instituted Worship, as appears, *1 Chron.* 25. & *2 Chron.* 23. 18. now the ten Tribes did imitate *Judah* in their Songs, but abused them to the Worship of their Idols, and polluted them with their Impiety, Idolatry, and Hypocrisis, when they should have Worshipped God in *Sion*, they Worshipped *Baalim*, with the *Calves* at *Dan* and *Bethel*. Hence the Lord threatens to turn their musick into mourning, *Amos* 8. 3.

The word which we render, *Noise*, in the Original signifies a clamour, a trouble, a tumult, a multitude; which being all united make a compleat Periphrasis of a Popish Quire. It is a clamorous, troublesome, tumultuous multitude, when they meet together they make a horrid, hideous noyse, which takes with God no more than the grunting of a Swine; or the braying of an Ass, as St. *Jerome* long since hath well observed.

The *Viol* is here put Synecdochically for all kind of Musical Instruments, which *David* had prepared in great abundance for the praising of God; which these abused to the praise of Idols. The word *Nebel* which we render a *Kiel*, is by some called a Psaltery, a Harp, an Organ; the Instrument is now out of use, and it is not certainly known what it was.

### OBSERVATIONS.

*All the singing and praises of wicked men is an abomination to the Lord.*

Away with them (saith God) they are a burden to me, your Vocal and Instrumental Musick, your Viols, Harps, and Organs, your Songs and Sonnets are in mine ears but as the howling of a Dog. Praise is not comely in the mouths of Sinners. As for the wicked, saith God, What hast thou to doe to take

*Hamon, strepitus, rixa, tumultus, multitudo. Tumultum vocat, quod sine spiritu clament & ululante. Hec strepitus fuit Deo molestus, ut grunitus suis, aut clamor asinorum. Hieron.*  
See more on *Amos* 6. 5.  
*Nebel est Instrumentum Musicum cujus species nobis est incognita, Calvin.*

take my name into thy mouth? Christ would not be praised nor published by Devils. The bellowing of those Bulls of *Basan*, and roaring Stentors in the Papacy (many of them being deep in the Quire, and deeper in the Ale-house) with all their Theatrical Musick is an abomination to the Lord, his soul loathes such swill, and that one Quere, *who hath required these things at your hands?* is enough to sweep both the workmen and their work, out of the Church of God. These are a meer *Noyse*, a *Voyce*, and nothing else; they draw nigh to God with their lips (scarce that) when their hearts are farre from him; yet this is the greatest part of their Worship (as *Gualter* hath well observed.) Ringing of Bells, and roaring of Organs, is a great part of Papists Divine Service.

In Papatu, Organorum concentus, & campanarum

boatus, non postrema cultus Divini pars est creditur. Gualter.

It is the musick of the Heart, and not of the Tongue that God delights in, it is this which makes us like the Angels in Heaven, when in our degree we praise that God on earth, which the Angels continually adore and praise in heaven. We should therefore be much in this duty of praising God, for though the Ceremony be vanisht, yet the substance abides still.

See more on Amos 6. 5.

Away then with that Histrionical and confused chaunting, which even the Learned and wiser sort of Papists have condemned, as *Aquinas*, *Alfredus* an Abbot, *Cajetan*, and others, as I have proved at large on *Amos 6. 5*. At present hear what *A Lapide* the Jesuit sayes against those, *Qui inconditis & confusis vocibus tumultuariae hanc & ululant. Videant cantatores ne totam Psallendi devotionem collocent in voce canora, in subtilitate modulandi, in agilitate tonos mitemendi, &c. Dum insistentius mimeris, ut curiosorum aures titillent, & ad serapiant, ne audiant a Deo, Aufer a me tumultum canticorum tuorum*

*A Lapide* in Amos 1. 23.

VER.



But, let judgement run down as waters, and righteousness  
as a mighty stream.

**W**EE have seen before what God did not require of this People, and that was Sacrifices without faith and obedience. 2. Wee are come to that which hee did require of them, viz. an active lively faith, shewing it self in justice and righteousness towards our neighbour, so that if they should say, Since God rejecteth our Services and Ceremonies, what would he have us doe? why the Prophet answers, *He hath shewed thee O man what is pleasing to him, and what he desireth of thee, viz. to doe justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

Interpreters vary about the sense of the words, 1. The Rabbins and those that follow them, make it a commination of Gods Judgements against Israel for their sins; they read it thus, *And judgement shall run down, or be revealed as waters, q. d. Though you abound with Ceremonies and Sacrifices, and think to shroud your selves under their shadow, yet I will cause my Judgements to break in upon you like waters in abundance, and my righteous vengeance as a mighty stream shall bear down all before it, because of your Idolatry and Hypocrisie.*

2. But the words are properly an exhortation to amendment of life, this people had been grossly guilty of injustice and unrighteousness; and therefore God calls upon them now to break off their unrighteousness, and to give themselves up to equity and righteousness, that their repentance might be as eminent as ever their sin had been. Let Judgement therefore run down, or *run* down like waters, i. e. be alwayes ready to doe Justice and Judgement, let it abound and extend it self to all, doe not suppress it as formerly you have done, *Amos 4. 1. & 5. 7, 12.* but let it run fully and freely to every one that hath need; content not your selves with a drop or two, but *gush* out of righteousness, which may abundantly refresh all the oppressed and needy of the Land; so much the phrase imports, as you may see, *Isa. 48. 18. O that thou hadst hearkened*

*Figgat, volut, a Rad. Galal, volvere, convolvere, obruere. The vulgar Latine mistaking the root, render it, Revelabitur; and render Vau by O, when it is oft used adverbially, (as it is here) by sed.*

to my Commandments; then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the Sea, &c. Hadst thou obeyed my commands, then had thy peace been as a river, that abides and runs continually, and thy righteousness, i.e. the fruits of thy righteousness, viz. thy prosperity and happiness should have been as the waves of the sea, which are abundant and perpetual. This sense is most genuine, and agrees best with the contexture and thread of the discourse; the former sense is Rabbinical and wrackt.

3 Others distinguish between judgement and righteousness, thus.

1 By *Judgement* they understand a faithful and impartial execution of justice.

2 Under *Righteousness* they comprehend all the duties of the first and second Table, relating both to God and man. So the word righteousness is sometimes used in Scripture, as *Rom. 6. 18. Ephes. 6. 14.*

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive that Judgement and Righteousness here are Synonima's, signifying one and the same thing; and that the latter clause is exegetical and illustrates the former, as it doth frequently in the Scripture, *Let judgement run down as waters*, what is that? *Benshab E. than, tanquam torrens fortis, vel fluvius verberans.* why let righteousness run down as a mighty stream, i.e. let nothing hinder you from a constant and vigorous execution of Justice and Equity, and this execution of Justice is oft called Righteousness, *Psal. 72. 2. Acts 17. 31.*

# OBSERVATIONS.

1 God delights in Justice and Righteousness more than in Sacrifices.

I hate your Sacrifices, I abhor your feasts: (saith God) but let judgement run down as waters; it is that I delight in. As obedience is better than Sacrifice, and Mercy than Burnt-offerings, *Hos. 6. 6.* so Justice and Equity (which is one branch of our obedience) is better than Sacrifice; of the two, God had rather have Justice without a Sacrifice, than Sacrifice without Justice; and therefore (saith God) Away with your songs and sacrifices, give me righteousness and obedience. It is not thousands of Rams, nor sivers of Oyl, but doing justly, which

which God requires of us, *Micah 6. 8. so shall we say. Learn to do well, seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow;* without this all our religion is vain. Let men profess Angelical Sanctity, yet if they do not what is just and righteous, all is but hypocrisy, *James 1. 27.*

2 *Obf. Rulers must abound in judgement and righteousness*

*Actio una non  
denominat ho-  
minem.*

They must not only do an act or two of righteousness, for one act doth not denominate; but they must be *rivers* always running with righteousness. This elegant Metaphor of a River may give us some hints how Justice should be executed.

- |      |                |
|------|----------------|
| Viz. | 1 Openly.      |
|      | 2 Fully.       |
|      | 3 Freely.      |
|      | 4 Universally. |
|      | 5 Constantly.  |
|      | 6 Zealously.   |

1 *Judgement* must be executed *openly*, that all may see the equity of the sentence. Rivers run openly, who so will may see them. So Courts of Justice should be open; hence the Judges of old sat in the Gares, where all might see and hear what they did.

2 *Fully*, Justice must run with a plentiful and an abundant stream. They must not confine Justice, nor imprison it, but as occasion requires they must abundantly dispense and disperse it abroad. They must not content themselves with a few drops or acts of Justice, but it must run down with a mighty stream. Goodness is of a diffusive nature; now Justice is a singular good, and therefore should be communicated to all.

3 *Freely*, the river offers it self freely to all, who ever is athirst, may drink of it freely. Men should not be bribed and hired to do Justice; but it should flow as freely and spontaneously from a Ruler, as water from a spring. The light of the Sun, and the liberty of the Air should not be more cheap and free, than Justice amongst us.

4 *Universally and commonly*, without respect of persons. When justice is duly administered, it must run down as waters, and streams, which run by the poor mans doors, as well as

by

by the rich; and by the poorest Cottage, as well as by the stately Palace.

5. *Constantly*, Rivers run continually, the stream is alwaies rowling down: so should Magistrates be constant *pro re nata*, as occasion requires in the execution of Justice, in the places of their abode.

6. *Zealously and vigorously*. A mighty stream carries down all before it: So a good Ruler breaks thorow all impediments, discouragements, and temptations that might hinder the free course of Justice. No friends nor foes, no gifts nor bribes can hinder him from a faithful discharge of the duties of his place. As we see in *Moses, Job, Samuel, Nehemiah*. This is Gods work, and he is cursed that doth it negligently. When men are good, it is a joy to them to do judgement, *Prov. 21. 15.* and this is the way to safety and settlement, *Isa. 32. 16.* 17, 18. *Dan. 4. 27.*

*Rapido montano  
flumine torens,  
Stermit agros,  
sternit sara la-  
ta, boum, la-  
bores. Virg. A-  
neid. l. 2.  
See more in my  
Com. on Psal.  
82. 4. p. 112, &c  
See Mr. Patrick  
Jewish Hypoc.  
chap. 14 p. 226.*

# VERSE 25.

*Have yee offered unto mee sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?*

**T**He Prophet comes now to conclude the Chapter with an Amplification of the Superstition and Idolatry which from first to last did abide in *Israel*. Their *Fore-fathers* of old were Idolaters in the wilderness, there they worshipped the golden Calf, and *Baal-Peor*, Numb. 25. 1, 2, 3. No sooner were they come to *Canaan*, but they were on their knees to *Baal* and *Asherah*, Judg. 2. 13.

Yea and then their Posterity (saith the Prophet) have justified them in their Idolatries, and shewed that the evil is hereditary, and so the more to be abhorred; in that you have added Calves to Calves, and Idols to Idols, lest they should boast of their Ancestors, the Lord upbraids them with their *Fore-fathers*, and tells them that they were Idolaters before them, and were punished for their Idolatry, and so should they; as they had been like them in sin, so they should be like them in suffering.

In the words we have, 1. *Israels sin, They sacrificed not to God, but to Idols, as in the next verse.*

2 Here is a double aggravation of their sin, both in respect of Time and Place.

1 Here is the *Time* how long they grieved the Spirit of God, not forty daies, but forty years, even the whole time of their abode in the wilderness.

2 The *Place*, it was in the Wilderness, where they lay under the Rod, and were kept under severe Discipline, and where the Lord lead them miraculously, and fed them miraculously, with Mannah from Heaven, giving them waters from the Rock, and with a mighty hand protecting them, and carrying them upon Eagles wings, above the reach of many dangers and distresses, *Amos 3. 1, 2.*

This is *locus difficillimus* (saith Mercer) this verse, and especially the next are two of the hardest verses in the whole Prophecy. Many doubts do here arise.

*Quest. 1. Why doth the Prophet charge this people with not offering sacrifice in the wilderness, when they never lived in the wilderness, but lived many ages after their Fore-fathers came out of the wilderness? as appears by the series of those Judges and Kings which governed them since the time that they came from Egypt.*

*Ans.* Though the same numerical men were not in the wilderness, yet the house of Israel was there, and what their Fore-fathers did, is imputed to the posterity who made up one body with them, and were bound up in the same bundle with them.

These walking in the Idolatrous steps of their Fore-fathers, justified their Idolatry, and as they worshipped the golden Calf in Egypt, so these worshipped the golden Calves at Dan and Bethel. Thus they being heirs of their Fathers guilt, and imitators of them in their Idolatry, the Lord chargeth them here with their sin also, saying, *Have ye offered to mee sacrifices in the wilderness?* Hee doth not say, Have your Fore-fathers offered sacrifice to mee? but he chargeth them with the sin; and this is usual in Scripture, when the children walk in the Ancestors sins, to charge the children with the sins also, as *Mat. 23. 35.* Our Saviour chargeth the Jews with the blood of *Abel* and *Zacharias*, whom they slew. How could they slay those that were slain long before they were born?

*Ans.* By imitating their cruelty, they approved of the like

like cruelty in their progenitors, and so became partakers with them in their sin, and should partake with them in their plagues; not onely for the murdering of *John the Baptist*, and those of latter times; but even for the blood of all the Saints that ever was shed to that day, even from the blood of righteous *Abel*, the first that ever was slain, to the blood of good *Zacharias*, who was so barbarously slain between the Temple and the Altar, *q. d.* God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon you their children, that have walked in their wicked steps, with the greatest severity, because ye have sinned against the greatest light; and if the blood of one innocent *Abel* lay so heavy upon *Cain*, that he cried, his punishment was greater than he could bear; how sad is your condition that are charged with the blood of so many thousands of innocent, holy men! so that as all Beleevers are the children of *Abraham*, and have Interest in all the Promises that were made to him: So all persecutors are the seed of *Cain*, and have interest in all the curses which fell upon him.

Quest. 2. *How are all condemned here as Idolaters, when wee read of some good men amongst them that sacrificed to God, and not to Idols? as Moses, Eleazer, Joshua, Caleb, Phineas, and Aaron, the Saint of the Lord, as the Psalmist calls him, Psal. 106. 16.*

Ans. The Prophet condemns the body of this people *in- Quod major* definitely, and not all and every individual person, singly. He *multitudo ab-* speaks against the wicked Ancestors of wicked children, and *repta fuerat,* against those wicked children which walked in the steps of *idè totus popu-* those wicked Ancestors; God had his remnant amongst them, *lus merito dam-* natur. Calvin. and some grains of wheat in this heap of rubbish and chaff.

Quest. 3. *Have yee sacrificed to mee?* The Interrogation is a strong Negation. So *Joel 1. 2. q. d.* You have not sacrificed to mee all that time, but you have discovered your averseness from mee, and your proneness to Idolatry on all occasions. But how can this be true, when we read that the Israelites did sacrifice to God in the wilderness? when the Covenant was ratified, they offered Eucharistical sacrifices to *Jehovah*, *Exod. 24. 4, 5.* And after the dedication of the Tabernacle, and the consecration of *Aarons* sons, and at the celebration of the feast of the Passover, *Levis. 8, 21, 28. & 9. 2. Numb. 7. 3. & 9.*



*Ans.* Though they did offer some sacrifices the first and second year that they were in the wilderness, yet after they did not so ordinarily and so frequently, as when they came to *Canaan*, for in the wilderness they lived in want, and had not that plenty of Sheep and Oxen, as they had when they came into *Canaan*. They had scarce any flesh to eat, much less to sacrifice, therefore the Lord fed them with Mannah and Quails. Besides, they were in a fleeting condition, and so unfit for sacrificing, or for circumcision. and therefore 'twas omitted in the wilderness for a time. They were not settled nor fixed, but as the Tabernacle removed, so they removed, and till they came to fix and settle, they could not so well sacrifice.

2 The Answer lyes most genuinely in that little Emphatical word *Mee*, *Have yee offered sacrifice to mee?* *q. d.* 'Tis true, I grant, you have offered sacrifice (saith the Lord) but 'twas to your Idols, and to Devils, *Deut.* 32. 16, 17. and not to mee, both you and your Fathers worshipped Calves and Creatures, and the host of Heaven (as in the next verse) and not mee, and therefore I will punish you as I did them. *Ezek.* 20. 15, 16, 18, 21. *Isa.* 43. 22, 23, 24.

'Tis true, they thought they worshipped God, and did him good service, but since they kept not to the Rule, but worshipped the Lord according to their own inventions, with rotten hearts, and unhallowed lives, therefore the Lord disowns all that they did, and tells us, that they did not sacrifice to him at all.

*Quest. 4.* How is it said that for forty years space in the wilderness they did not sacrifice, whereas 'tis apparent that the two first years at least they did offer sacrifice?

The Answer is easie; 'Tis usual in Scripture for roundness of number (though some few years may be under or over) to name a full and compleat number; as here forty years for thirty eight, that is, not forty precisely, but well nigh forty. So *Abimelech* is said to kill his seventy Brethren, when he killed but sixty nine, for *Jorham* escaped, *Judg.* 9. 5. So the seventy two Disciples are called the seventy. So *Gen.* 42. 13. it is said, *Thy servants are twelve brethren*, yet in the same verse it is said, *one is not*. By the like Synecdoche they are called twelve Apostles, when one was wanting, *1 Cor.* 15. 5.

So

*Scriptura plenum ac integrum numerum usurpat Synecdochicis pro parte; cum paululum quiddam aut desit, aut excedat. Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 15. c. 24.*

So the Lord threatned to punish *Israel* forty years in the wilderness, whereas they were not punished forty years compleat, for the punishment began to be inflicted on them about the second year of their departure out of *Egypt*, as appears by comparing, *Numb.* 1. 1. with *14.* 33. and *32.* 13. See more *Deut.* 29. 5. *Judg.* 20. 46. *2 Sam.* 5. 5.

*V. Plinius D. Reynolds de lib. Apochy. Præleſt. 219. p. 1188, &c. See the large Annotat. on 2 Sam. 5. 5.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Teaching by Questions and Interrogations is very Emphatical and lively.*

Have yee offered sacrifice to mee? did yee serve mee? or rather, did yee not serve your selves in the wilderness? The Scripture abounds with such Questions, *Adam where art thou?* *Gen.* 3. 9. So said Christ, *How readeſt thou? what think you?* *Mat.* 18. 12. and 21. 28. *Luke* 7. 42. *James* 4. 5. This quickens and awakens men, it makes them heed things better, and consider what to answer. Be not then offended when Gods Ministers ransack thy soul, and question and quicken thee out of thy Lethargy, and deep security.

2. *God bears long with sinners.*

Forty years he was grieved with *Israel*, in the wilderness. He bore with those ten Tribes well nigh three hundred years before he destroyed them; He bore with the old world a hundred and twenty years; He bore with the *Amorites* four hundred years. 'Tis one of his Royal Attributes, that he is a God of infinite Patience, and Long-suffering. *Exod.* 34. 6. See more in my *Pſal.* 103. 8. *Jonah* 4. 2. We have all daily experience of this his goodness to us. *Com. on Hof. 13. 12. p. 4. to 11.*

3. *To sin against mercy aggravates sin.*

For this people to sin against God in the wilderness where he led them, and fed them miraculously, and upheld them in the midst of so many dangers, doth greatly heighten their sin. See more in my *Coment. on 2 Tim. 4. 10. p. 427, 428.*

4. *Long continuance in sin is very displeasing unto God.*

Hence the Lord so often mentions this forty years obstinacy of *Israel*, as that which exceedingly offended and grieved him, *Numb.* 32. 13. *Pſal.* 95. 11. *Act.* 7. 42. & 13. 18. This made the Lord to complain of *Jerusalem*, *Jer.* 13. ult. *Oh Jerusalem, wilt thou not bee made clean? when shall it once bee?* See more in my *Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 10. p. 429.*

*Frustra expecto  
quia obdurasti  
in scelere, de-  
sperata est tua  
correctio, fun-  
ditus ergo te e-  
vertam.* Hieron.

He denounceth a woe against them for their hypocritical dal-lying and delaying; Woe unto thee, *wilt* thou not be made clean? 'tis not, *canst* thou not? but *wilt* thou not? They were wilfully impenitent; 'tis this rebellious will of men that destroyes them, *Psal.* 78. 10. *Isa.* 30. 9, 15. & 42. 24. *Jer.* 5. 3. & 6. 16. & 8. 5. & 44. 17. *Zach.* 7. 11. *Rom.* 8. 7.

Obj. *Wee will turn.*

*Ans.* You do but dissemble (saith God) with mee, *When shall it once bee?* what? not after so many wooings and warn-ings? what? not after so many years purifying Sermons? nor so many melting mercies? nor so many awakening judge-ments? nor after so many Sabbaths and Sacraments, fasts and feasts? will nothing cleanse thee from thy old abominations? Oh when shall it once be? This obstinate persevering and continuing in sin, makes the Lord so oft to upbraid men with it, as that which will be their bane, *Exod.* 16. 28. *Neh.* 9. 30. *Psal.* 78. 40. *Luk.* 13. 44.

5. *Children that imitate their Fore-fathers in sin, shall bee like them in punishment.*

See my Com.  
on Hol. 13. 16.  
p. 82. & 146.

God will visit the sins of the Fathers upon those children that tread in their steps, *Exod.* 20. 5. Hence the Lord so oft forbids us to follow sinful Fore-fathers, *Psal.* 78. 5, 6, 8. *Ezek.* 20. 18. *Zech.* 1. 4. And Stephen aggravates the sins of the Israelites, saying, *That as your Fathers did, so do yee,* *Act.* 7. 51.

6. *Idolatrous, Hypocritical service, is no service.*

Have ye offered Sacrifice to mee? (saith the Lord to those Hypocrites) no, you have not served mee at all.

1. Since you do not worship mee according to Rule, but according to your own inventions, I abhor it, and account it as null.

See my Schools  
Guard. Rule  
21.

2. *Your hearts are rotten;* what the heart doth not, God accounts as not done, *Isa.* 43. 22, 23, 24. Though they abounded with sacrifices, yet God saith there, They brought him none, *viz.* in sincerity. As knowledge without practice is no knowledge, 1 *Sam.* 2. 12. so duties not practised are no duties in Gods esteem.

*Quia non soli  
Deo offerebant,  
perinde erat ac  
si non offere-  
bant.* Mariana.

3. They served not God alone, but served him and their Idols too, and therefore God disowns all they did, as not done to him, for he will be served truly and totally, without halting

or halving, 1 King. 18. 21. 2 King. 17. 33. Ezek. 20. 30. Zeph. 1. 5.

## VERSE 26.

*But yee have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch, and Chiun, your Images, the star of your god, which yee made to your selves.*

THESE Hypocrites were ever and anon boasting of their Sacrifices, to them the Prophet in the person of the Lord here further answers, and tels them, it is true, Your fore-fathers made a shew of serving me, carrying my Tabernacle, and all things belonging to it, in the Wilderness; but their hearts were set upon their Idols, and they Worshipped their *Moloch*, and the other Images of those Planetary gods, and not me.

This *But* spoils all.

The better to convince them of their Idolatry, the Prophet here instanceth in three of their chief Idols,

*Moloch,  
Chiun, and  
The Host of Heaven.*

1 The Prophet instanceth in these Heathen Idols to shame Israel.

2 Here are the setters up of these Idols, and those are, these wicked men themselves, *which yee made to your selves.*

3 Here is their love and affection to those Idols, they bare them, and carried their Images about with them.

This is, *Locus difficilis & valde perplexus* (say Interpreters) it is a difficult, knotty, perplexed Text, I never yet met with its fellow, *Quot verba, tot mysteria*, it hath more mysteries, and various interpretations than words. I shall endeavour to clear up all.

1 Q. *The first Quere is, What is meant by Moloch here?*

A. Under this grand Idol are Synecdochically comprehended the rest of their Idols. This *Moloch* was an old abominable Idol, which the *Ammonites*, and other Heathens worshipped. Hence it is oft called, *the abomination of the Ammonites*, 1 King. 11. 7. & 2 King. 23. 13. in other places it is called

called *Molech*, *Levit.* 18. 21. and *Milcom*, 1 *King.* 11. 5. 33. *Zeph.* 1. 5. and by *Amos* and *St. Stephen* it is called *Moloch*, *Acts* 7. 43. they both upbraided the *Jews* for worshipping this abominable Idol, and that in the Wilderness, where the Lord shewed them so many signal Miracles and Mercies; there they began to practise this foul Idolatry. The *Ammonites* had many gods, but one among the rest was their Patron, and tutelary god, which they called their King, *Jer.* 49. 1, 3. *Amos* 1. 15. (as they did this *Moloch*) but the Holy Ghost calls it an abomination, for that which is highly esteemed in the sight of men, is an abomination in the sight of God. This Idol not only *Ammon*, but *Israel* trusted in as their Guide, and Leader in their travels; which shewes their horrid ingratitude in casting off God, who had been so long their Protector and their King, and now to chuse an Idol, and a *Moloch* for their God and Guide, and therefore it is emphatically called *yours, Your Moloch*, which you chose for your God and King. To this Idol the *Israelites* most inhumanely, and barbarously offered their Sons and Daughters in Sacrifice, *Levit.* 18. 21. & 20. 2. 2 *King.* 23. 10.

What this Idol should be, is hard to determine. 1. Some say, it was an hollow Idol shaped like a man.

2. Others make it an hollow Image made of Brasse, having the face of a Bullock, and hands spread abroad like a man, that openeth his hands to receive somewhat. There were seven Chappels built for it, before which the Image was set, who so offered a Fowl or Dove, went into the first Chappel; if he brought a Lamb, he went into the second; if a Ram, into the third; if a Calf, into the fourth; if a Bullock, into the fifth; if an Ox, into the sixth; and if he offered his Son, into the seventh, and he kissed *Moloch*; as the Sacrificers in *Hosea* kissed the Calves, *Hos.* 13. 2. The Son was set before *Moloch*, the Image having fire put under it was made burning hot, then the Priest taking the Child, put him into *Molochs* burning armes, and to the end that the father might not hear the cry of the Child, they did beat upon Tabernacles, whence the place was called Tophet, of *Toph*, which is a Taber.

V. *Jalkut* in his  
Heb. Com. on  
*Jer.* 7.

V. *Tertul.* *Apolo-*  
*ge.* c. 9.

3. Others conceive that it was the star of their god, probably *Saturn*, the highest of the Planets, to whom the *Phenicians* sacrificed their Children, saith *Tertullian*.

4 Many think it was the same Idol which we call *Baal*, to whom they sacrificed their Sons and Daughters; Jer. 7. 31. & 19. 5. & 32. 35.

5 And most genuinely, it is conceived that this *Moloch* whom they worshipped was the *Sun*: which is King of Planets, and chief of Stars: the most operative of them all, and fullest of splendor; which some did worship by the name of *Beel-famen*, *l. 4. c. 7.* *V. Euseb. Prep. Evang. l. 1. & Lord of Heaven*; for as the Moon is called *Melachab*, the Queen of Heaven, Jer. 7. 18. & 44. 17. 25. So the Sun is called *Melech*, the King of Heaven, whom the *Persians* worshipped as their God. *V. Strabo Geog. lib. 25.*

*And Chinn your Images.*

Their second Idol was *Chinn*, and here again Interpreters are divided, and though it be not much material to know what this Idol was (the sin reproved being not in the name, but in the thing, which was an abominable Idol, however called) yet 1. Some say this *Chinn* was the Idol *Hercules*, which in the *Egyptian* Language was called *Chon*, but varied into another Language might easily make *Chinn*. St. *Luke* calls this supposed Deity, *Remphan*, Acts 7. 43. from *Repha*, which signifies a Gyant, and thereupon some have thought it was *Hercules*, who was wont to be pourtraied in a Gyant-like form. *V. Beza in Act. 7. 43.* The Evangelist useth this name rather than *Chinn*.

2 Because he followed the Translation of the Seventy, who being appointed by *Ptolemy* King of *Egypt* to translate the Bible, they use the *Egyptian* name *Remphan* in their Greek Translation:

3 The name *Remphan* being better known to the *Jews* in those dayes, (who made great use of the Septuagint) than that of *Chinn*, therefore the Evangelist mentions that rather than the other.

4 Others conceive that it might be *Jove*, or *Mars*, or *Venus* especially, which Planet they worshipped as their Guide and Leader in the Wilderness; it being the Leader of the Morning, and fore-runner of the Sun, and is called *Lucifer*, which is said to be placed in the fore-head of *Moloch*, because it goeth before the Sun-rising. This Planet the *Sarrazens* worship at this day.

5 But most genuinely it seems to be the Idol *Saturn*, which



which in the *Arabick*, and *Persick* Language is called *Chinn*, and *Amor* speaking of that time more especially when *Israel* wandred in the Wilderness of *Arabia*, where they committed this foul Idolatry, calls the Heathen god after the *Arabick* Language, *Chinn*, or *Chivan*. Besides, the *Egyptians* at this day call *Saturn* in their Language, *Raphan*, or *Remphan*, as *Luke* doth.

*You have born the Tabernacle of your Moloch.*

*Melkehem, vegi vestro.*

ΤΗΝ ΣΚΗΝΗΝ ΤΣ  
ΜΟΛΔΧ, Τα-  
bernaculum  
Moloch. Sept.

Or, you have erected a *Tabernacle* to him, as to your King. Some read it, you have born the *Tabernacle* of *Siccub* your King, which they conceive to be the name of some Idol; indeed *Siccub* may serve to have some affinity with *Succoth*, a Goddess of the *Babylonians*, 2 *King*. 17. 30. But the Holy Ghost which is the best interpreter of it self, by *St. Luke* (who following the *Septuagint*, which read it *Succoth*, not *Siccub*) renders it a *Tabernacle*, and so justifies our Translation.

*And Chinn your Images.*

*Nesatem, por-  
tatis, i. e. a-  
massis, suscep-  
tis. Mercer.*

Here we see the love and affection of these Idolaters to their Idols, they bear them, and carry them on their shoulders (say some) by way of pomp and honour, as Idolaters are wont to doe, *Isa*. 46. 7. the Prophet speaking there of an Idol, tells us, that he is born on mens shoulders to the place where he must stand, to be seen abroad.

2 Others conceive that the Images of this Idol-god were enshrined in some little portable *Tabernacles* (as the Image of *Diana* had its shrines, little houses, or caskets to put it in, *Acts* 19. 24.) which the people as many of them as were given to Idolatry, carried about with them among their stuffe. So *Rachel* stole her fathers gods, and brought them with her stuffe into *Canaan*, *Gen*. 31. 34. As good men by Prayer take in God for their companion with them in their journeys, *Gen*. 35. 3. *Acts* 21. 5, 6. so Idolaters carry about with them their Idols, Hosts, Crucifixes, &c. for religion and protection sake, as so many tutelary gods in their voyages and journeys.

3 Here is the multitude of their Idols, set forth in the Plural number, and *Chinn your Images*, which imports the great number of them, and doubles their sin. 1. They make New-gods. 2. They make Images of those New-gods in honour

nour of them, contrary to Gods expreſs Command, Exod. 20. 4.

Or *Chim* your Images, that is (ſay ſome) your notable Image, the plural number for the ſingular (as oft) eſpecially in names of dignity.

Hence we may obſerve againſt the Papiſts, that the Scripture condemns not only Idols (which themſelves confeſs unlawful) but alſo *Images* for religious Worſhip; God will not be Worſhipped by any viſible Picture, and therefore the Prophet condemnes both *Moloch* and *Chim* with their Images, yea the Evangelift condemnes the very Figures of thoſe Idols which they make to themſelves, Acts 7. 43.

*de Idolol.* Rom. Eccl. 1. 2. c. 3. Sect. 40. p. 421. & Rivin in Hof. 8. 4. and above all, Mr. Durham in his elaborate Com. on Revel. 9. p. 454.

*Talmitechem,*  
from *Iſele*m,  
*Imagines vel*  
*figuras veſtras.*

See more, Dr.  
Reynolds de  
*lib. Apocryph.*  
Leſt. 219. &

### The ſtar of your god.

Or, the ſtar which is your god, or rather the Images which you worſhip are like a Star, either like the Sun, or *Saturn*; for their gods were nothing but Planets, or Stars which they worſhipped, in, or by Images repreſenting them, Acts 7. 41, 43. Figures which yeo made to worſhip them (ſaith St. Stephen) even the Hoſt of Heaven, as the Stars are oft called, Deut. 17. 3. Pſal. 33. 6. Iſa. 34. 4. & 45. 12. Jer. 33. 22. Dan. 4. 35.

*Cocab elobechem,* ſtellarum veſtrorum Deorum.

The Heathen Idolaters were great worſhippers of the Hoſt of Heaven, and this peece of Idolatry the *Jews* had learnt from them, Jer. 8. 2. and with this St. Stephen chargeth them, Acts 7. 42. that they worſhipped the Hoſt of Heaven, i. e. Sun, Moon, and Stars, as it is written in the Book of the Prophets, viz. of the leſſer Prophets, (of which *Amos* is one, out of which this text is quoted) all the twelve being bound together in one Book, leſt they ſhould be ſcattered, or loſt, by reaſon of their ſmallneſs.

Many of the *Jews* conceived that all the Stars were Gods, and that there was ſome Deity in them, and therefore they worſhipped them, as appears 2 King. 23. 11. Jer. 7. 18. & 8. 2. & 19. 13. & 44. 17, 19, 25. Zeph. 1. 5.

With the like Sin the Prophet here chargeth them, viz. with Idolizing the ſtar of their god, or the ſtar your gods. Hee ſpeaks it ſarcaſtically and tauntingly, q. d. ſee what goodly gods

These *Israelites* had many other deasters, and false gods, if we may believe *Josephus* *Antiq.* l. 4. c. 6.

gods yee have gotten, these are thy gods O-*Israel*; Stars and Planets, Idols and Images; you have forsaken the living God for dead ones, and so have changed your glory into shame; and have left the God that protected you, for Idols that cannot protect themselves.

*Which yee have made to your selves.*

All these feigned Deities with their Images are your own inventions, and figments of your owne brain, I never commanded any such kind of worship from you. Hence Idols are called the work of mens owne hands, *Psal.* 115. 4. and the Lord threatens such as worshipped the work of their own hands, because they provoked him to anger thereby, *Jer.* 2. 16. & 25. 6. & 44. 8. *Acts* 7. 41. to shew the vanity and nothingness that is in Idols, and the folly of Idolaters in worshipping such things as themselves had made, they are oft called, *The work of mens owne hands*, and their owne inventions; with which they please themselves, though they displease God.

*Q. But whom doth the Prophet charge here with all this gross Idolatry, whether the Ancestors, or the Posterity?*

*A.* Both. 1. Hee begins with their fore-fathers in the Wilderness, and the better to humble them who so much boasted of their fore-fathers, he labours to convince them of their gross Idolatry, and shewes how early they began to practise this Sin, when they worshipped the Golden Calf, and Moloch, as appears by the prohibitions against the worshipping of it, *Levit.* 18. 21. & 20. 2.

2 He chargeth the Posterity, and brings down this Idolatry along to their times, shewing how they had justified their ancestors in their Idolatry, by worshipping the Calves at *Dan* and *Beihel*, and following *Baal*, yea and worshipping the Host of Heaven, *1 King.* 11. 5. & *2 King.* 23. 5. 11. *Ezek.* 8. 16. *Zeph.* 1. 5.

The summe of all is this. *It is true, O yee children of Israel, that your Progenitors made a great shew of serving and honouring me, carrying my Tabernacle about with them, in the Wilderness, pretending that it was their glory to have me present amongst them; when indeed their hearts were set upon their Idols, and false Deities, as Moloch, and Chiun, the Sun, the Moon, the*  
*Stars,*

*Tò Portastis tabernaculum Moloch, pertinet ad 40. annos in Deserto, cum sacrificavimus non Deo, sed Moloch & Idolis, Act. 7. 43.*

Starres, and all the Host of Heaven, as appears by the multitude of those Images, and representations of their Idol-gods which they carried about with them to worship them; and you their Posterity have trod in the sinful steps of your fore-fathers, and have out-gone them in Idolatry; therefore I will now banish you to the remotest parts of Assyria, even beyond Babylon.

## OBSERVATIONS.

## 1 Naturally we are exceeding prone to Idolatry.

This is clear from the example of these *Israelites*, to whom the Lord so oft appeared, *Exod.* 19. & 33, &c. both in ways of Judgement, and of Mercy. To them the Law was given, and to them were committed the Oracles of God, *Psal.* 147. 19, 20. *Rom.* 3. 2. & 9. 4, 5. and yet how frequently and fearfully did they and their Fathers fall into this sin; and this was not only the temper of these *Jewes*, but of us *Gentiles* also. See more in M. Caryl on Job 31. 26. Obf. 1. so, we are easily seduced, and lead away with dumb Idols, 1 *Cor.* 12. 2.

2 When men know God, yet walk not up to their light, but wilfully sin against it, then God gives them up to a reprobate sense, so that they worship Stocks and Stones, Starres, and Images, as these did here, *Acts* 7. 42. See more in my Com. on 1 Tim. 4. 4. Obf. 5.

Thus it was with the *Gentiles*, *Rom.* 1. 24, 25, 26, &c. Those that will not beleeve and obey the Truth, God will give them up to strong delusions to beleeve lyes, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11. false Prophets shall arise and cry down Ordinances, and you shall beleeve them; they shall cry up Superstition, Idolatry, Libertinism, &c. and you shall follow them. This is a sad Judgement, yet usually God thus punisheth Sin with Sin, as blindness with blindness, ignorance with greater ignorance, and idolatry with grosser idolatry; when men begin to fall from God, they fall to worship Calves, Starres, Stocks, and Images. They never rest till they come to destruction. Error minimus in prins pio; se maximus in fine. See Manton

As all Sin, so especially this of Idolatry is very prolific. The Cloud that at first is like a mans hand; will suddenly overspread the whole Heavens. The little Wheel sets the great one a going. A little Defeat at first may become a total Rout at last, *Per scelera ad scelus*, one sin usually makes way for another. on Jude 12. p. 421. and my Com. on 1 Tim. 3. 13. p. 230. &c. Greenhil

*Fertilis est Idolatria ut ex uno Deo filitio centum mox gignantur; ex superstitione unum featuriant mille. Calvius.*

See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 16.  
p. 146.

another. Sin and error is endless, wicked men (when the Devil drives) know not where, nor when they shall stop or stay, *Prov. 23. ult. Hof. 10. 1. & 13. 2. Jer. 9. 3, 5.* Sin hath no foundation, but runs on and multiplies in infinitum. *Abaz* that at first burnt Incense to Idols, at last burnt his children to them, *2 Chron. 28. 3.* as these Jews did theirs to *Moloch*. It concerns us then to keep close to the Rule, for if wee swarve never so little from that, we shall suddenly run our selves into a Labyrinth of Superstition, sin and error.

3. *Fore-fathers must not be followed in sin.*

These Israelites forsook the Rule to follow their Fore-fathers in their Idolatry; and now they perish with them. But of this before.

4. *Idolaters are deeply in love with their Idols;*

They hug them, they carry them, they kiss them, *Hof. 13. 2.* In *Jer. 8. 2.* we have five expressions to set forth the strong affections which Idolaters bear to their Idols. They love, serve, seek, worship, and walk after them, as if they could never do enough for them. They had as lieve part with their lives, as part with them, *Judg. 18. 24. Iee have taken away my gods (saith Micah) and what have I more? q. d. you have even taken all, since you have taken away mine Idols, which are so near and dear to mee. They are married to them, no wonder then if they love them, Hof. 4. 17. Besides, they are gods of their own making, Exod. 32. 1. and 'tis natural to every one to love its own workmanship.*

5. *Idolatry besots men.*

It makes men worship Posts and Pictures, Stars and Planets, Dogs and Cats, Onyons and Leeks, any thing save God. As those that are given up to corporal uncleanness, care not with whom they commit it: So 'tis in spiritual Whoredome. Affection blindes the judgement, and besots men. Idolatry is a bewitching, flesh-pleasing-sin, which steals away the heart, and therefore is compared to fornication, *Ezek. 23. 2. to 18.* which insatuates and steals away mens hearts. The Whore of *Babylon* hath all alluring Ceremonies, Altars, Images, Gorgeous Vestments, Musick, &c. with many other enchantments to seduce men, *Rev. 17.*

1, 2,

*Quis nescit qualia demens Aegyptius portenta colat? Juven. Sat. 15. V. Godwin. Jewish Antiq. l. 4. c. 7. p. 164. & M. John Smith, his select discourse. p. 25. and my Com. on Hof. 13. p. 119.*

*Humanarum mentium ludibrium superstitio. Curtius.*

Vex. 36.

## of the Prophecy of Amos.

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1, 2, 4. Hence we read of the delectable things of Idolaters, *Isa. 44. 9.* The sight of the Sun, Moon, Stars, and all the host of Heaven, should have convinced them of the Majesty and Glory of their Creator, and have induced them to worship him, but they being besotted and blinded by sin and Satan, worshipped the creature instead of God, and serve those which were made for their service.

Besides, what man that is well in his wits will trust in such gods for safety, as cannot save themselves from fire and spoil? All their Idols, the Calves and all, *Hos. 10. 5, 6.* were carried away by the Conquering *Assyrians*; according to the custom of Conquerers, which was to carry away the gods of the Conquered Nations, *Jer. 43. 12.*

## 6. God hath many Hosts and Armies at command.

Hee hath the Host of Heaven, 1. *Angels*, 1 *King. 22. 19. Luk. 2. 13.* 2. Hee hath Sun, Moon and Stars, even the Stars in their kinde shall fight against *Sisera*, *Judg. 5. 20.* These *Stephen* calls the Host of Heaven. 3. All creatures are his Hosts and Armies, ready to execute what ever he commands, *Job 25. 3. Amos 9. 6.* Fear therefore to offend this Lord of Hosts. But of this before.

## 7. To worship the Host of Heaven is a great sin.

Hence the Lord upbraids these *Israelites* both fathers and children with this sin, and threatens to send them into captivity for it. This the Lord oft forbade them, *Deut. 4. 19.* and blames them for it, 2 *King. 17. 16.* 2 *Chron. 33. 3, 5. Jer. 8. 2, 3. & 19. 13. & 44. 17. Ezek. 8. 16.* and commands that he should dye that did it, *Deut. 17. 3, 4, 5.* *Job* calls this kinde of Idolatry a denying of God, and a sin to be punished by the Judges, *Job 31. 26, 27, 28.* How much greater is their sin which worship gods of their own making, gods of Wood and Stone, Crosses, Crucifixes, Images, &c. Idols which their own heads invented, and their own hands have made, yea that with five words of consecration can create their Creator, and then worship the works of their own hands. How great this Idolatry is, *Cosermus* the Jesuite shall tell you, if (saith hee) Christ be not really and corporally present in the Eucharist, then are the Catholicks the grossest Idolaters in the world.

*Talis esset Idolatria, qualis in orbe terrarum nunquam vel visus, vel auditus fuit. Coser.*

## 8. Will-worship is displeasing unto God.

When men make Gods to themselves, they make Rods for them-

them-



See more *Caryl*  
on Job 31. 26.  
Obf. 3. and my  
Com. on Hof.  
13. p. 89, 120.

themselves. God will rid his hands of such, and send them beyond *Damascus*, yea beyond *Babylon*, there they shall live in misery and slavery, serving sin and Satan in the want of all things, who would not serve God with joy and gladness of heart in the abundance of all things. The Israelites of old made a golden Calf, and worshipped the works of their own hands, but it cost many of them their lives, *Exod. 32. 27.* 'Tis a good Rule, *De Deo, nil sine Deo*, In Gods worship we must do nothing without the warrant of his Word, *Deut. 12. ult.* *Mat. 28. 20.* all must be done according to the Pattern, even to a Pin, *Exod. 27. 19.* hence 'tis said nine times in one chapter, That *all was done as the Lord commanded Moses*, *Exod. 39. 1, 5, 7, 31, 36, 39, 32, 42, 43.*

#### VERSE 27.

*Therefore I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus, saith the Lord, whose Name is the God of Hosts.*

**W**EE have all along seen *Israels* sin, wee are now come to their suffering.

*I will cause you to go into Captivity.*

The Lord had freely given them the holy Land for their Inheritance, to the end that they might serve him with gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things; but since they had defiled that good Land with their abominations, the Lord resolved to rid the Land of them, and to send them into captivity beyond *Damascus*, which was fulfilled when *Salmaneser* took *Samaria*, and subdued the Kingdome of *Israel* to himself, *2 King. 17. 6, &c.*

*q. d.* Since your Fore-fathers were bad, and you are worse, treading in their Idolatrous steps, and out-going them in sin; therefore I will bring upon you the judgements threatned, driving you out of your own Land, and despairing you in foreign Countries.

In the words we have .1. A judgement threatned, and that is banishment and captivity. *I will cause you to go into captivity.*

2. Here

2. Here is the extent of this captivity, 'tis beyond *Damascus*, saith *Amos*, beyond *Babylon*, saith *Stephen*.

3 Here is the meritorious and procuring cause of this suffering, and that is their sin, implied in the Illative particle *Therefore*, you have been Idolatrous, superstitious, hypocritical, &c. therefore you shall go into captivity.

4. Here is the confirmation of this commination; 'tis not I, but the Lord, whose name is *the God of Hosts*, that hath said it, and he both can and will do it, unless by timely repentance ye prevent it.

*I will cause you to go into Captivity beyond Damascus.*

q. d. I will send you packing farther than the people of *Damascus*, for the Syrians of *Damascus* were carried captives but to *Kir*, 2 King. 16. 9. but you shall be carried captives far beyond them, even to *Persia*, and the Region of the *Caspians*, Ezra 8. 17.

2. And more genuinely, whereas they looked on *Damascus*, (the Metropolis of *Syria*, a City of praise, i. e. a renowned, goodly, wealthy, strong City, *Isa.* 7. 8. & 8. 4. *Jer.* 49. 25.) as an impregnable fortress, and frontier defence for all their Country, and they might think to get shelter there, the King thereof being their confederate; the Prophet tells them that *Damascus* should not save them, for they should be carried captives beyond *Damascus*, even into the farthest and remotest parts of *Assyria*, beyond *Babylon*.

Quest. But how shall we reconcile *Amos* and *Stephen*? *Amos* saith they shall go beyond *Damascus*, but *Stephen* saies they shall go further, even beyond *Babylon*, *Act.* 7. 43.

Ans. 1. Some conceive it might be some mistake of the Scribe, beyond *Babylon*, for beyond *Damascus*, but there is no ground for such a conceit.

2. The Answer is easie, the difference is onely verbal, not material, in words, but not in sense. What the Prophet spake somewhat darkly, *Stephen* declares more clearly, according to the truth of the history, and the verity of what was done; and 'tis a known Rule, that the Penmen of the New Testament do give the sense, though not the very words of the Prophets which they quote; when they cite places, they do not translate but explain and expound them rather; *Luke* writing in Greek, See more, *Shew* plus *Symbol.* Loc. 57. p. 212. Schools-Guard. Rule 20.

followeth the Greek Version which then was so common amongst them.

3. Peradventure the Prophet might mention *Damascus*, that he might not add affliction to the afflicted, and utterly dismay them; had he told them they should go beyond *Babylon*, the very thoughts of their banishment into such a foreign Land, so far distant from their native Country would have broken their hearts; and therefore he conceals what *St. Stephen* utters, *Ye shall go beyond Babylon*, and so they did, for they were dispersed into *Persia, Media, and Assyria*. This was fulfilled in part by *Salmaneser King of Assyria*, 2 King. 17. 6. but fully by *Esar-haddon*, & lib. 11. 6. 5. 2 King. 17. 23, 24.

V. Jo.eph. Antiq. lib. 9. c. 14.  
& lib. 11. 6. 5.

## OBSERVATIONS.

### 1. Idolatry is a Land-destroying sin.

This great sin brings with it great destruction. This cast *Israel* here out of all, 2 King. 17. 22, 23. This is a Covenant-breaking, and a God-provoking sin, what ever sin hee bears with, hee cannot, hee will not bear with this. As I have elsewhere shewed before.

See my Com.  
on Hof 13. V.  
Index Idolatry.

And did the Lord punish *Israel* for this sin, and shall *England* think to escape? No, no, parity of sin, will bring parity in punishment. How are we infatuated, and given up to strong delusions to beleve lyes? The lyes of Popery, Arminianism, Socinianism, Anabaptism, Quakerism, &c. Yea have wee not Judicial Astrologers, (Satans familiars) who sacrifice to *Moloch* and *Chimn*, and all the host of Heaven; that make the stars their Gods and Guides; by them they can calculate mens nativities, help men to their stolen goods, cast figures, yea fore-tell (if you'l beleve them) famine, sword, pestilence, peace, plenty, and what not? what is this but to draw mens hearts from confiding in God, to trust in lying vanities? and shall not the Lord visit for these things? and doth not his wrath burn against us for that wee have Sorcerers like the *Philistims*. *Isa* 2. 6. The good Lord quicken the hearts, and strengthen the hands of our Magistrates against all the workers of iniquity, before Gods wrath break forth upon us, and it be too late.

*The end of the Fifth Chapter.*

Mr. Halls Exposition on Amos.

some A. no. 101100 x 3 1/2 in.

AN  
 EXPOSITION;  
 WITH  
 Practical OBSERVATIONS  
 UPON  
 The Sixth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE I.

*Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, and trust in the  
 Mountain of Samaria; which are named chief of the  
 Nations, to whom the house of Israel came.*

**I**N this Chapter the blunt Prophet raiseth his stile, *In hoc capite*  
 grows Rhetorical, and is very eloquent; (as *est admirabile*  
*St. Austin* from this very Chapter hath long since *quoddam arti-*  
 observed) not with a fantastick, frothy, affected *ficium, tam ad*  
 eloquence; but with a grave and decent elegan- *morem, quam*  
 cy of speech, suitable to the dignity of the matter which hee *ad ornatum &*  
 treats of. Hee that makes the dumb to speak, and out of the *venustatem ora-*  
 mouth of babes and sucklings hath ordained strength to con- *tionis, Aug. de*  
 found his enemies; can by his Word and Spirit make a stam- *Doct. Christi. lib.*  
 mering *Moses*, a rustical *Amos*, and silly fisher-men, fluent *4. cap. 7.*  
 of speech. No matter what the Instrument is, if God be but  
 the Teacher.

In this Chapter is contained the Sum of *Amos* his fifth Ser-  
 mon, where we have sin and sorrow, security and misery at-  
 tending each other.



1 Here is a reprehension of Judah and Israel, for their carnal security, & sensuality. *V. 1. to 6th.*

2 For their stupidity and foolishness, in taking no warning by the example of their rich and populous neighbour Cities, which God had destroyed for their sins. *Vers. 2.*

3 For their contempt of Gods Threatnings, which brought forth oppression and tyranny. *Vers. 3.*

4 For Pride, Luxury, and Riot, especially in their Rulers and rich men. *Vers. 4, 5, 6.*

5 For Inhumanity, want of sympathy, and brotherly compassion towards such as were in distress. Though the whole Land was depopulated, and all the open Country was exposed to the fury of the merciless enemy, yet because their fenced Cities (whereof Jerusalem and Samaria were the chief) were at present free, they lived at ease, and never regarded the miseries of others. *Vers. 6.*

6 There was amongst them, perverseness, obstinacy, and rebellion. *Vers. 12.*

7 Perverting of Justice. *Vers. 12.*

8 Carnal confidence, and gloriation in that which could not help them. *Vers. 13.*

The Lord had born long with these their great provocations, and used all means to amend them, but all in vain, and therefore now follows their woe and punishment. As first Captivity, banishment and deportation out of their own Land. *Vers. 7.*

2 Detestation of them and their privileges. *Vers. 8.*

3 Desolation and destruction of their Cities, by the Sword, confirmed by Gods Oath. *Vers. 8.*

4 Desperation, and sinking under their carnal confidences. They should be so terrified, that they should not once dare to make mention of the name of the Lord. *Vers. 10.*

5 The Pestilence should rage so terribly, that if a numerous family be reduced to ten, those ten shall dye, and for want of others, a mans Uncle shall bury him. *Vers. 9, 10.*

6 An Epidemical and general destruction of rich and poor, Palaces and Cottages, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now be punished for their sins, from one end of the Land to the other. A forein enemy like a violent flood should over-run the whole land from North to South, and from one side to the other.

*Woe to them that are at ease in Zion.*

In this first Verse, the Prophet thunders against the secure, and sensual Inhabitantes of *Judah* and *Israel* and especially against the great ones, *Qui ne divitiis, sic vitiis primi suere*; as they abounded in wealth, so in wickedness also; who gave themselves to Pastimes, and Merriment, in despite of the Prophets threatnings, and that in a time when Gods Judgements were round about them. Though *Amos* were primarily sent to *Israel*, yet *Judah* being partaker with them in Sin, he all along in this Chapter joyes them together in reproof.

In the words we have, 1. *A Judgement denounced*, included in the Particle, *Hoi, Woe*, which is used three waies in Scripture.

1 By way of *Commiseration*, when we are grieved at the calamities which we see are coming upon a people, *Jer. 6. 4. & 13. ult. Micah 7. 1.*

2 By way of *Imprecation*, when we pray for the destruction of the incurable enemies of Gods Church, *Psalm 40. 14, 15.*

3 There is a *Woe of Prediction, and denunciation*, which is *Woe*, est interjectionem summam & gravissimam calamitatem alicui obventuram significans. *Revel.*

this *Woe* of denouncing miseries against an impenitent People, is very frequent in Scripture; as *Isa. 3. 11. & 9. 11, 18. Ezek. 16. 23. Mat. 11. 21. & 23. 23, 25. Luke 6. 24.* The Prophet had oft fore-told them of evils approaching, but they were no whit awakened thereby, but Princes, and people still lay secure, and sung a *requiem* to themselves, putting the evil day farre from them; therefore the Prophet falls to denouncing Woes against them, the better to awaken them out of their deep sleep, and security. The *Woe* prefixt in the front of this Verse, is to bee understood in the rest of the Verses, as vers. 3. *Woe to them that put the evil day farre from them. Woe to them that lye upon beds of Ivory, &c. vers. 4. Woe to them that chaunt to the sound of the Viol, vers. 5. Woe to them that drink Wine in bowls, ver. 6.*

2 Here are the *Persons* against whom this Judgement is denounced, and those are,

*Hastanaan-*  
*nim. i. e. que-*  
*ris, insolentis-*  
*bis & securis;*  
*tranquillitas*  
*nim bonines*  
*truos & in-*  
*solentes reddit.*  
*Radix Shaan*  
*videtur consti-*  
*tu ex shon, i. e.*  
*qui nihil ti-*

*mon, curant, agunt; sed in summa pace & rerum affluentia, securam, otiosam, tranquil-*  
*lam, & delicatam agunt vitam, à Lapide. The Septuagint mistaking the root Shaat, for*  
*Shaan, doe render it corruptly, Vt spernuntibus Sion.*

2 He thunders against *Carnal confident-ones*; who trusted in the Mountaine of *Samaria*; that is, they trusted in the strength and riches of *Samaria*, their chief City, as if it were invincible; and by reason of its situation impregnable. They trusted not in God, but in their wealth and walls.

3 *Ungrateful men*; God had made them the Head of the Nations, and brought them into *Canaan*, a Land flowing with Milk and Honey; and by his owne Almighty Power he planted them there, and drove out the *Canaanites* before them, (*Psal. 44. 3. & 78. 55.*) but they forgot the God of their Mercies, and fell to Luxury and Rior. He made them the chiefest, most famous, and renowned of all the Nations, he had separated those twelve Tribes from all the rest of the World, to be his owne peculiar people (*Exod. 19. 5. Jer. 2: 3.*) they were to him as the flower and first fruits of the Nations, whom he prized and preferred before them all.

*Nehubet, i. e. fa-*  
*mosi, celebres.*  
*Reicit, signifi-*  
*cat, primitias,*  
*& principium*  
*gentium inter*  
*qua: eminebat*  
*Israel, tan-*  
*quam populus*  
*à Deo electus, Deique primo genitus. à Lapide.*

To whom the House of Israel came.

This is another Priviledge; these two Cities, *Jerusalem*, and *Samaria* were the chief Seats, and residence of their Kings, and therefore here was a great confluence of people, both for Civil and Ecclesiastical affairs, *Judah* and *Benjamin* went to *Jerusalem*, and the ten Tribes to *Samaria*,

3 Here

3 Here are the *Places* where those Sinners dwell, and that is in *Jerusalem*, of which Mount *Sion* was an eminent part, and therefore is oft put for *Jerusalem* itself (*à parte præstantiori fit denominatio*) this was the Metropolis of *Judah*, as *Samaría* was of the Ten Tribes, *Samaría* is principally threatened, yet because the other two Tribes were their brethren in sin, therefore he threatens them with parity of punishment.

The inhabitants of these two chief Cities were more secure and sensual in the midst of Gods Judgements than other parts of the Land, and therefore the Prophet deals more sharply and roundly with them, and by a Prolepsis prevents a cavil, whereas they might object, that they were the chief of the Nations, and all the people resorted to their Cities for Justice, and for the Worship of God, and therefore they concluded, that God would not destroy them, *Yea*, therefore saith the Prophet, *God will destroy you, because you sin against such Mercies and Priviledges.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Scripture is full of Divine Rhetorick and Eloquence.*

Carnal-worldly-wise-men look upon the Bible (as St. *Aug. Confess.* *in* did before his conversion) as a book of a low, incompt, & unlearned stile. This very sixth of *Amos* will in part confute such. The Prophecies of *Esay* abounds with such a fluent, divine, grave, and lofty stile, that all the eloquence of *Cicero*, and all the *Flowers* of *Demosthenes*, with the rest of those admired Heathens, is but as Chaff to Wheat, and Dross to refined Gold. Hence the Scripture is compared to a pleasant Garden bedecked with Flowers, and a rich Garment beset with Pearls; when the depth of learning that there lyes hid is uncovered, then the glory of the Word doth affect us, and leaves a deep impression of its excellency upon our spirits. VVee should not therefore barely read the VVord, but search the Scriptures, and dig those Mines, that wee may the better finde out the Golden Oare, *John 5. 39.* VVee should also bless God, who hath given such variety of gifts unto men, for the good of his Church. Some are *Eloquent Orators*, *Isa. 3. 3.* Others are *Acute Disputants*, and mighty in

*Naim, i. e. pul-  
cher, speciosus,  
suavis, tales e-  
nim sunt Psal-  
mi quos David  
composuit, &  
cani iussit, à  
Lapide,*

convincing, as *Apollo*, Act. 18. 24. 28. Some are milde and gentle, as *Barnabas*, others more fierce and fervent, as *Peter* and *Paul*. Some excel in Prose, others in Poetry, as *David*, who is stiled, *the sweet singer of Israel*, many spiritual songs are scattered up and down the Scripture, but none excelled in that gift, like *David*, who was more especially inspired by the Holy Ghost, and singularly qualified for that purpose. All these hath God gifted for the good of his Church, 1 Cor. 3. 22.

Observ. 2. *Those that are highest in Priviledges may be nearest to miseries.*

Woe to *Sion* first, and then to *Samaria*; So Rom. 2. 9. Wrath falls upon the *Jew* first, and then upon the *Gentile*. To be secure in other places was sinful, but to be dead and careless in *Jerusalem* the City of the Living God, where his Temple and Worship was, this doubled their sin, and therefore the Prophet Emphatically sets a Woe upon their heads. *Woe to them that are at ease in Sion.*

3. *Gods Ministers must denounce Woes against the wicked.*

As they must proclaim promises to the penitent, so they must denounce judgements against the obstinate. They must make a difference, to some they must shew lenity, and to others severity, *Jude* 22, 23. What dreadful woes do all the Prophets denounce against impenitent sinners. Christ, who was love it self, and in whom there was no gall, nor guile, yet how many dreadful woes did he denounce against the hypocritical Pharisees, even *eight woes* together, *Mat.* 23. 13, 14, 15, 16, 23, 25, 27, 29. If men will be so bold as to proclaim their wickednesse, Ministers must be so bold, as to proclaim their woes.

4. *Woe and sorrow is the portion of secure sinners.*

Both Legal woes, and Evangelical woes; temporal, spiritual, and eternal woes. The Law cries, Woe to such sinners, and so doth the Gospel; but Gospel-woes are the sadder of the two; for if the Law say, woe to us, yet the Gospel may say mercy to us; but if the Gospel say, woe to us, where shall we finde mercy? 'Tis true, sinners may laugh and be merry in the acting of sin, but woe and weeping is in the conclusion, *Luk.* 6. 25. *The end is death*, Rom. 6. 21. As all the promises of Grace and Mercy hang over the heads of the godly, and drop blessings upon them which

See my Com.  
on Hol. 13. 13.  
p. 14.

which way soever they go; so clouds of wrath hang over the heads of the wicked, dropping judgements upon them even in their highest prosperity, when they think themselves most free from misery. The mirth of every secure sinner that goes singing to hell, is no better than madness; for where security goes before, destruction ever follows; *When men cry Peace, Peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction*, Luk. 12. 19, 20, 1 Thes. 5. 3. Secure *Laish* became a booty to its enemies, *Judg. 18. 27.* Carelesse *Ethiopians* shall be made afraid, *Ezek. 30. 9.* And carelesse Daughters shall be troubled, *Isa. 32. 9, 10, 11.* God is much displeased with a people, when the fire of his wrath shall beset them round about, and yet they remain unhumbled and insensible, *Isa. 22. 12, 13.* and *41. ult.*

5. *God usually fore-warns us of woe, before hee sends woe.*

Hee first cuts men down with the sword of his mouth, before he cuts them off with the sword of his hand. Hee delights not to take sinners at an advantage, but loves to exercise his patience towards them, that they might repent, as wee see in both the destructions of *Jerusalem*, the one by the *Caldeans*, which was fore-told by the Prophets, and the other by the *Romans*, which was fore-told by Christ. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
Hos. 13. 16. p.  
64. &c.

6. *Carnal Confidence ruins a Land.*

When men forsake God, and trust in men and mountains, in Kings and Kingdomes, in Guards and Garrisons, both they and their creature-confidences shall perish; for, as there is no policy, so there is no power or fortifications that can defend us against God, *Prov. 21. 30, 31.* Use means wee may, but we must not Idolize them; prepare armies, and strong-holds, but not trust in them. They are branded that *trust in Riches*, *Psal. 52. 7, 9.* and cursed that *trust in men*, *Jer. 17. 5, 6.*

7. *Ingratitude is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin.*

God had made this people the head of the Nations, and chose them for himself from amongst the Nations, but they fought against God with his own blessings, and as they were increased, so they sinned against him, abusing the good Land which hee had given them, to Idolatry, riot, and excess, till at last the Land spewed them out.

See my Com.  
on Hos. 13. 16.  
P. 101, 102.

VERS.



## VERSE 2.

Pass ye on to Calneh, and see, and from thence go to Hemath the great; then go down to Gath of the Philistims, bee they better than these Kingdomes? or their borders greater than your borders?

THE Prophet goes on to awaken *Israel* and *Judah* out of their security, and to drive them from their carnal confidence in their Mountains, Ammunition, and fortified Cities; to this end hee sets before them Gods Judgements on the *Assyrians*, *Caldeans*, and *Philistims*, those Idolatrous and Heathenish Nations, whose bounds were larger, and their Cities stronger than theirs.

Hee instanceth in three,  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Calneh,} \\ \text{Hamath, and} \\ \text{Gath.} \end{array} \right.$

Fuit urbs munitissima, & obtinuit summum imperium, deinde vicina regio amena fuit & fertilis. Calvin. V. Plin. lib. 6. c. 26.

Hebraice dicta est Chamath; i. e. soliquid quasi sol inter urbes orientis effulgerit, à Lapide.

1. *Calneh*, this was an ancient, wealthy, great City; built by *Nimrod* after the Flood, in the Territories of *Babylon*, Gen. 10. 10. It was afterwards enlarged by the *Parthians*, and called *Ctesiphon*, and was made the Metropolis of the Kingdom.

2. *Hamath*, called here the great and mighty City to distinguish it from a City of that name in the Land of *Israel*, *Josh.* 19. 32, 35. It lay on the North side of *Israel*, and was a boundary of the promised Land, *Numb.* 13. 21. & 34. 8. *Zach.* 9. 2. 'Twas built by *Antiochus*, and thereupon called *Antiochia*, and was the Metropolis of *Syria*. 'Twas destroyed by the *Assyrian* for all its power and greatness, *Isa.* 10. 9.

3. *Gath*, a strong City of the *Philistims*, well known to *Israel* for its enmity against them, 2 *Sam.* 1. 20. 'Twas at last taken, its walls were broken down, and it made tributary to others, 2 *Chron.* 26. 6.

These bordering famous Cities were well known to them, and therefore the Lord instanceth in them, though under them synecdochically other flourishing Cities which were made

made a desolation, may also bee included. Hee bids them  
*See, and diligently consider* the downfall of those places, that  
 their falls might make them fear, and flye from security, op-  
 pression, and carnal-confidence, lest they bee ruined as these  
 were, and they bee made an example unto others since they  
 will not bee warned by others.

*'Tis not Nabat,  
 vidit, but Reu,  
 from Raab, ob-  
 servavit, curio-  
 se inspexit.*

*Bee they better than these Kingdomes, or the borders of their  
 Land greater than your borders?*

These words admit of some difficulty. Some make the  
 Interrogation a Negation, *q.d.* Are these Nations better than  
 yours? in no wise, for do but compare your Kingdome of  
*Judah* and *Israel* with those Kingdomes, your Cities with  
 their Cities; and your borders with theirs; and it will easily  
 appear, that none of those Nations are better than your Nation,  
 for either they are Tributary to others, or ruined: God hath  
 done more for you, than for them in many respects, the grea-  
 ter is your sin, and the sorer will your punishment bee, if you  
 abuse so pleasant a Land, and such rich mercies to the disho-  
 nour of him that gave them. Thus they bring in the Lord up-  
 braiding them for their ingratitude, that they had not rendred  
 according to the mercies hee had shewed them.

This sense is good, and many learned men go this way,  
 and though it must bee acknowledged, that if wee look on *Ca-  
 naan*, *Israel's* Land with all its priviledges, *it was the glory of  
 all Lands*, *Ezek. 20. 15.* yet other Nations might surpasse it for  
 strength, and greatness of Cities, for largeness of borders,  
 and for amenity and fruitfulness of soil, as *Babylon* did.

But with submission to better judgements, I conceive the  
 Interrogation to bee here an Assertion, and the genuine  
 sense of the place to bee this, That it was in vain for them to  
 trust in their Mountains, Riches, and strong Cities, since other  
 Nations with their Metropolies which were greater and stron-  
 ger than theirs, were now decayed and ruined. That Almighty  
 hand which brought them down, notwithstanding all their  
 Ammunition and Fortifications, will also bring *Israel* down  
 notwithstanding all their riches and strength. Behold there-  
 fore as in a glass, whither Luxury, Oppression, Security, and  
 abuse of Mercies hath brought those Cities, and do you fear  
 by their Examples.

*✓ Schools-  
 Guard, Rule 30*

The summe of all is this, *O ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem*  
*Qq* and

and Samaria, that glory in Mount Sion, and trust in the Mountain of Samaria; Go and see what I have done to Calneh, Hemath and Gath, three potent, populous, famous Cities, seated in three different Kingdomes, viz. Babylon, Syria and Palestina; consider how I have made them a desolation for their sins, and have brought their borders into a narrower compass, though they were larger and pleasanter than theirs, and were fortified both by Art and Nature: Bee warned therefore by their example, and go not on in your Idolatry, Luxury, Security, and Obstinacy, lest you also become a desolation like to them.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. We should diligently observe, and carefully consider the Judgements of God on others. *Jer. 7. 12*

We should not let a judgement passe that we see at home, or hear of abroad, without learning something of God from it. As wee should consider his mercies to make us love him, so we should consider his judgements to make us fear him. Hence 'tis that God bids his people here, Go, Go, Go; Go to Calneh, Go to Hemath, Go to Gath, and consider what I have done to them for their sins. Go not with your feet, but with your affections; go not in body to view the ruines of those places, (for that you may do and be never the better) but in your Meditations go thither, and observe Gods hand upon them to awaken you. As a man may go to Heaven even whilst his body is on earth, yet by Meditation hee may ascend thither; so by Meditation we may go to Germany, Savoy, Ireland, Poland, and see Gods Judgements there. Do not barely think of Gods Judgements, but ponder every circumstance, and rest not till you have sucked some benefit out of them, and got your heart affected with them.

Wicked men never once think of God or his judgements, they forget him daies without number, and he is not in any of their thoughts, and as for his judgements they are far above out of his sight; or if he sleightly think of them, that is all: But you must know that there are three Acts of the Soul, 1. Cogitation, 2. Meditation, 3. Consideration. Cogitation is a thought and away, Meditation is a dwelling longer upon an Object. But Consideration looks round about, and weighs all

all Circumstances of Judgements and Mercies, that they may take a deeper impression upon our hearts; and this is that which the Lord so oft calls for; Hee would have us *consider our waies*, to humble us, *Hag. 1. 5. 7.* His *Judgements* to fear us, *Job 23. 15.* His *Mercies* to allure us, *1 Sam. 12. 14.* His *Word*, that wee may attain the practical knowledge of it, *2 Tim. 2. 7.* This consideration fortifies the soul against sin, See more in my it layes before us the losse and hurt which attends upon sin, *Com. on 2 Tim.* so that wee cannot rush into it with that boldnesse, as the *3. 4 p. 118.* wicked and inconsiderate do. *Jer. 8. 6.*

2. *Gods Judgements on others must awaken us.*

Their destruction must be our instruction. As Gods people here must go to *Calneh*, *Hemath*, and *Gath*, so he bids them go to *Shiloh*, and consider what hee did to that privileged place, and be warned by their woes, *Jer. 7. 12.* 'Tis a great favour when the Lord teacheth us our lessons on other mens books, and backs, making them examples unto us, when hee might have made us examples unto them. See more in my *Com. on Psal. 73. ult. Obf. 1.*

3. *Sin brings famous Cities to ruine.*

Wee see here three famous Cities with all their Territories made a desolation for their sins. Let men make walls as high as heaven, and ditches as deep as hell, yet if sin reign within, it will ruine all, *Deut. 18. 9, 12.* This brought the Kingdome of *Israel* into the hands of the *Assyrians*, *2 King. 17. 7. to 19.* and *Judah* into the hands of the *Chaldeans*. Sins, especially crying sins, do emasculate mens spirits, and weaken the hearts and hands of a people, so that they become an easie prey to a cruel adversary. See more in my *Com. on Hof. 13. 16. p. 71.*

VERSE 3.

*See that put far away the evil day, and cause the seat of violence to draw near.*

**I**N this Verse the Prophet goes on with his charge, especially against the Judges, Rulers, Counsellours, and those in Power and Authority in the Kingdome of *Judah* and *Israel*. Hee chargeth them in this Verse with two sins, which were the effects and evidence of their security before mentioned, Verse 1. The first is the contempt of Gods Threatnings,

God oft foretold them by his Prophets that Judgements were coming upon them, but they would not beleieve it, but *put the evil day far from them*; Sleighting Gods Threatnings as if they had been but fables, and would never surprize them. Though they walk in wayes of wickednesse, adding sin to sin, and daily provoked the Lord to anger, yet they blest themselves in their evil wayes, promising themselves peace and prosperity for all that. They were setled upon their lees, and lived without any fear or thought of danger, giving themselves up to Idlenesse, Wantonnesse, Pride, Luxury, Violence, and all manner of Iniquity; not once thinking of the destruction which was coming upon themselves, and the Kingdome. Yea they counted it a loathsome thing (as the word in the Original signifies) once to mention the evil day. They were so given up to mirth and jollity, that they would not once hear of sorrow. They thought themselves priviledged by having the Temple; and Gods worship amongst them, against all storms and tempests. But the further they put away the evil day, the nearer it was to them; and though they could have wished there had been no such day, yet their wishes were but vain; for the Lord had decreed to bring a dismal day upon them, and it is not the counsels of men, but the counsels of the Lord that shal stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations, *Psal. 33, 10, 11*. As they had their evil day of sinning, so God was determined to bring upon them an evil day of suffering.

*Middah*, from whence comes *Menaddim*, significat remotionem, seu quicquid propter immunditiam removetur; quod amara fugiunt & averfatur.

*Q. But what was that evil day?*

*Diem mali, i. e. diem pene, fync. Gen.*

*A.* The evil day here meant, was more especially the day of their Captivity, when the *Assyrian* should come and carry away *Israel*, and the *Babylonian* should come and carry away *Judah* out of their own Land into Captivity and banishment. This evil day the Prophet calls before, a day of darkness; and not of light, *Amos 5. 18, 19, 20*.

*Separati esis in diem malum. vulg.*

Though the evil day bee

here primarily meant of some particular judgement coming upon *Israel*, yet it may be extended unto the day of the general judgement, which will be unto the wicked (in a way of eminency) the evil day of sad and doleful tidings. *Jeaus.*

day,

day, and yet you are mark'd out, and set apart for an evil day. All the evil dayes which you have hitherto escaped, do but lead you to an evil day from which there will bee no escaping.

But the words are better read *actively* (according to our *Menaddim, e-* Translation) setting forth the danger that attends voluptuous *longatis, procul* and sensual men, whose belly is their God, who lye upon *repellitis, &* beds of Ivory, and sing to the sound of the Viol, yet put the *cum fastidio* evil day far away. Their work all the day long was to do evil, *quodam &* and yet they put the evil day far from them with abundance *contemptu à* of scorn and contempt. *vobis rejicitis* *diem malum.*

*Mercer.*

*And cause the seat of violence to draw near.*

Here is a second effect and fruit of their security, and that is *Tyranny*, and *Injustice*, *Cruelty* and *Oppression*. *They cause the seat of Violence to draw near.* This sin doth necessarily follow the former, for when men are hardened in sin and security, putting off the Threatnings of God, and driving away all fear of danger from themselves, such must needs grow outrageous and cruel, terrifying others with their Violence, *Oppression*, *Rapine*, and *Unrighteousness*, *Amos 3. 10.* So much the word in the Original implies; *Iniquity* acted by force, and violation of Justice.

*Quest. But what is meant by causing the Seat, or Throne of Violence to draw near?*

*Ans. 1.* Negatively; it cannot be meant of the *Assyrian*, or any other enemies power that was coming neer; *Yee cause the seat of Violence to draw neer*; that is, (say some) by your sins yee cause the violent *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* to draw neer, and come against you to your own destruction. This is a Truth, but not from this Text.

*2.* Much lesse can it be meant of causing any false feasts or *Sabbaths* to draw neer; as the *Septuagint* mistaking the Original (as they do very often) do render it, *appropinquantes Sabbata mendacia*, as if they had set up false *Sabbaths*, which God abhorred. But this is far from the scope of the Text.

*The word is, Sheber, Sedes, &is not Sabbas, quiescere.*

*3.* Neither is it put *Antithetically*, by way of opposition to the former clause, *q. d. O yee voluptuous and secure sinners, yee put the evil day far from you, and yet by your sins yee pull it upon you, persevering still in your oppression and cruelty; you would faine put off the judgement from you, yet you will*



not remove your sins, which cause the Judgement.

But the meaning briefly is this, The Prophet chargeth them with their going on in their Luxury and Inhumanity, oppressing, and vexing the poor and needy, which had no helper. They were so hardened in their sin, that now nothing but unrighteousness, and violence reigned amongst them. They had turned the \* *Seat* of Justice into the *Seat* of Injustice, and the Throne of Majesty into the throne of Iniquity, establishing mischief by a Law (*Psal.* 94. 20.) rushing violently into sin, as the Horse into the battle; abusing their power to the abusing of their brethren. So much is implied by the *Seat*, and Throne of violence, as appears by the like expression, *Revel.* 2. 13: Christ commends the Church of *Pergamus* for her constancy to the truth, and that in a place where *Satan* had his throne, i. e. in a place where Heresie, Superstition, Idolatry, and all kind of wickedness prevailed, and bare sway without controul: for where sin reigns, there *Sathan* rules, and there he erects his throne. So these sensual and secure sinners, had set up a throne of violence, and a seat of iniquity, that is, they were come to the height of oppression, and cruelty, as being monsters, rather than men.

\* *Sedes*, i. e. tribunal. (*Syn. c. Gen.*) *Violentia*, i. e. in qua promittitur violentas sententias, seu in qua violentiam exercetis potentis vestris. *Met. ad. iustit.*

*Solum in q. i. tatis significat potentiam, multitudinem & dominium impietatis. Dio. cer.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

Three Observations do Naturally flow from these words.

- 1 That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men.
- 2 That evil men put this evil day farre from them.
- 3 That when they do so, then they run into violence and outrage.

1 Of the first, That God hath an evil day, to bring upon evil men. As they have had their time of provoking him, with the evil of sin, so he will find a time to vex them, with the evil of punishment. Such violent oppressors are the proper objects of Gods hatred, *Psal.* 11. 5. and though for a time they may escape trouble, yet they are not delivered from it; all their preservations from evil, are but reservations to greater evils. The Lord hath many wayes to deliver the godly, but he hath no way to deliver the wicked, they having refused all wayes of his appointment for their owne deliverance, therefore as to them, he knoweth many wayes to reserve them to the

V. My Com. on  
*Psal.* 82. 2.

the Day of Judgement, to be punished; *2 Pet. 2. 9.* When Beasts have been sated in pleasant Pastures, then they are brought forth to the slaughter, *Jer. 12. 1, 3.* As God hath made all things for himself, so he hath destinated the wicked for wrath, *Prov. 16. 4.*

2 *It is the property of wicked men, to put the evil day farre from them.* They look upon Gods Judgements at a distance, not so much as once dreaming of them, till they light upon them. They cry, Peace, peace, when sudden and swift destruction is at hand. This is usual with wicked men, the god of this World hath blinded their eyes, and they wilfully put out their owne eyes, lest they should see that which would but trouble them, and hinder their carnal mirth. They cry, Let us eat and drink (even when Judgements are ready to fall upon their heads) and if wee must dye to morrow, let's be merry before we dye, *Isa. 22. 13.* thus they are jeering, when they should be fearing; they take no notice of Gods Judgements, they are farre above out of his sight, *Psal. 10. 5.* Let Noah warn the Old World one hundred and twenty years together, of an approaching Judgement, yet they knew nothing till the flood came, and swept them all away; and as it was then, so saith our Saviour it will be at the end of the world, *Mat. 24. 37, 38, 39. 2 Pet. 3. 3, 4.* This hastens wrath, when men cry, the dayes are prolonged, and because Judgements are deferred, therefore they will never come; this makes the Lord come suddenly upon such sinners, *Ezek. 12. 22, 27. Amos 9. 10.* Sensuality and security close mens eyes, that they cannot see an evil day approaching, *Luke 21. 34.* it makes men feel trouble before they see it, and to be past hope before they had any fear of hurt.

Wicked men, when they are in prosperity, they dream they shall so continue to eternicy; hence the Prophet brings them in, making Covenants with Death, and agreements with Hell, and compacts with all other troubles, that they should not come nigh them. Thus they foolishly conceit, and speak, *Isa. 28. 15.* *If the over-flowing scourge pass thorow, yet it shall not come nigh us.* Thus they make lyes their refuge, and under falshood doe they hide themselves. Notwithstanding all the Judgements threatned against them for their sins, yet they vainly promised themselves safety, and impunity, as if they had

Thom. 5. 3. 5.

5.

5.

had been at a fee with the Devil, and Hell, and thereupon call for Wine, and strong drink, pampering and flattering themselves in their sin, confidently concluding (as if all the World, and Time it self were at their dispose) that *to morrow should be as this day, and much more abundant*, q. d. Those sad Predictions of the Prophet will never come, but we shall scape as well for the future as we have done hitherto, yea better, and more happily, *Isa. 56. ult.* But let us be moved with fear as *Noah* was, *Heb. 11. 7.* and get into the Ark of Gods favour and protection, and then we may sweetly sing, *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom should I fear?* at famine and destruction in an holy security thou mayest laugh, for in six troubles the Lord will be with thee, and in the seventh he will not leave thee, *Job 6. 19, 20, 21, 22.* get an holy, prudential, providential fear, to prepare for troubles before they come, and then you will not be dismayed at them, when they doe come; Darts fore-seen are dintless, *Job 3. 25. Psal. 46. & 112. 6, 7. Hab. 3. 16.* Realize dangers as if they were present, that will help to awaken us; but when men look upon Judgements at a great distance, and think it may be many years hence ere they come, or they may not come in their dayes, or they may not come at all; this breeds security, and security breeds tyranny and oppression, for so it runs, *They put the evil-day farre away, and then cause the seat of violence to draw near.*

3. *Obf. Where carnal security, and Atheistical contempt of Gods Judgements goeth before, there cruelty, violence, and all manner of wickedness follows.* Where health, wealth, peace, and security goes before; there pride, oppression, blasphemy, and cruelty usually follows, *Psal. 73. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. & 94. 4, 5, 6, 7.* especially when wickedness gets into the Throne, and sits on the seat of Judicature, having all power in its hand to oppress the poor, and vex the needy, then it becomes exceeding tyrannical and cruel.

Ὁ φόβος  
βελουτικός  
ποικιλ. Timor  
facit consiliati-  
vos. Arist. Rhet.  
1. 2. c. 6.

Qua procul  
sunt, ea non  
metuuntur; sci-  
unt enim omnes  
se aliquando  
morituros, sed  
quia mors non  
prope esse viden-  
tur, ideo eam  
nihil curant.  
Arist. Rhet. 1. 2.  
c. 6.

## VERSE 4.

*That lye upon Beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the stall.*

**T**He Prophet goes on with his Charge against the Rulers of *Judah and Israel*. In this verse hee chargeth them with a *fourth Sin*, which was an effect and evidence of their security, and that is *Luxury and Sensuality*; they spent their time in eating, drinking, sleeping, in mirth and musick, without any sense or sorrow for the afflictions of *Joseph*. Like Swinish Epicures, they minded nothing but their pleasures, stretching themselves on their Ivory-beds, eating the fattest of the flock, inventing variety of Musick and Melody, and new waies to increase their mirth; drinking wine in deep carousing cups, and anointing their bodies with the principal and most precious oynments which those times and places afforded. And that which highly aggravates their sin was this, that all this was done in a time of mourning, when Gods hand was upon the Regions round about them, and they should have humbled themselves in dust and ashes, and lay on the very ground for their great provocations; yet then were they lying on beds of Ivory, and gave themselves up to all manner of pastimes and merriment. The Prophet therefore the better to awaken them, doth raise his stile, and in a most curious Rhetorical strain doth set before them their lust and luxury, their sin and misery.

*Quest.* The question then will be, whether this curious fare, costly beds, and other creature-delights be simply unlawful?

*Ans.* They are not *per se*, and in themselves simply unlawful. God allows great men to lye better, and fare better, and go finer than inferiour persons, provided they use them soberly, seasonably, and thankfully. *The Lord hath given us all things richly to enjoy*, 1 Tim. 6. 17. But then we must not abuse them to riot and excess, especially in a time of mourning, for that is a God-provoking sin, *Isa. 22. 12, 13, 14*. So that it is not the sober use, but the prophane abuse of the creature which displeaseth God; use them we may, but not luxuriously

*V. my Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 3. P.  
89, 90.*

riously and unseasonably. 'Twas the sin of this people, that they were riotous in a time of mourning, and did indulge themselves in these sensual delights, even when the fire of Gods wrath was kindled against them, and the Prophets were denouncing the utter destruction both of King and Kingdom; when they should have abated, rather than abounded, and have abridged themselves of their lawful liberties, seeing Gods hand on their Brethren round about them; but they, like scornful *Epicures*, laid not to heart the afflictions of *Joseph*, but like the rich glutton, they fared deliciously every day, not once thinking of the misery of poor *Lazarus*, Luke 16.

So that here wee have, 1. The sin reproved, and that is, *Luxury*. 2. The kinds or specification of this *Luxury*, and that is fourfold,

- They exceeded {  
 1 In Eating, *Vers* 4.  
 2 In Musick, *Vers* 5.  
 3 In Drinking, *Vers* 6.  
 4 In Costly Oynments, *Vers* 6.

*They lye upon beds of Ivory.*

Ordinary beds content not these effeminate ones, they must have costly, curious beds made of the finest Ivory, filled with the softest feathers, and no doubt but they were adorned with gold and silver, as others had been before them, *Hos*. 1. 6. They were so proud, that even their beds, which should have minded them of their graves, proclaimed their pomp and vanity.

They lye upon Ivory bed-steeds; or as the words are in the fountain, they lye upon *Bed-steeds of the Tooth*, viz. such as were made of the Elephants Tooth, which we call Ivory. Not that the Bed-steeds were wholly made of Ivory, but some principal parts of them were adorned with this rarity, which came from *India*, and remote parts, *Ezek*. 27. 15. They were not *lesti eburnei*, but *eburati*, not totally made, but checkered or covered with Ivory; for herewith stately things were wont to be garnished because of its whitenesse and dearnesse, for what is far fetched, and dear bought, delights the wantons of the world. In those Eastern parts they delighted much in Ivory; hence in Scripture wee read of *Ivory-houses*, 2 *Kings* 22. 39. *Amos* 3. 15. *Ivory-Palaces*, *Psal*. 45. 9. *Ivory-Thrones*,

*Gnal Mittoib  
 Shen, super le-  
 tis dentis. Met.  
 Mar.*

*Thrones*, 2 Chron. 9. 17. *Ivory-benches*, Ezek. 27. 6. *Ivory-Towers*, Cant. 7. 4. *Ivory-Vessels*, Rev. 18. 12. and *Ivory-beds*, as in the Text. On these they lay sleeping, having little else to do: They were not *lecti discubitarum*, beds to lye and eat on, (as the custome then was) but *lecti lascivi*, soft beds on which they lay sleeping, and stretching themselves idly and lasciviously, for so it follows,

*They stretch themselves upon their Couches*. When they should be serving God in their places and callings, they in a lazy, luskish, lustful manner, lye yawning and stretching their pampered carcases upon their Couches.

Some read the words thus, *They are luxurious upon their Couches*, that is, they stretch themselves luxuriously and lasciviously upon their beds, *viz.* 7. the word is used, Ezek. 17. 6. for a luxuriant Vine. The sense is the same.

*They eat the Lambs out of the Flock, and the Calves out of the midst of the Stall.*

Sins seldome go single; before they lay daintily, and now they feed daintily; ordinary fare will not down with them, they must have the fattest and finest that can be pickt out of the flock, and most fatning fold. They chuse the fattest out of the places where they were kept to be farned, be it field or fold. Great beasts are fed in Pastures, but Calves are fed in Stalls, where they are fed with their Damms milk quietly and obscurely, which helps concoction, and fattens them sooner. Thus they gave themselves up to ease and delicacy, pampering themselves with the finest fare.

*Agros è grege optimos ex saginario; nam Præpositio Ex, nomini appositæ ἐξ ὧν & præminencia cujusdam significationem ipsi quandoque tribuit, seu ἐξ αἰετὸν τὴν ἡμέραν.* Glasius in Philog. S. l. 3. Traff. 6. Canon. 8. mibi p. 765. ubi Plura.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. A lazy, sensual, Epicurean life that is spent in eating and drinking, sleeping, and pastimes, is very displeasing unto God.

This makes him set a woe upon the head of those that are at ease in *Sion*, lying on beds of Ivory, stretching themselves upon their Couches, and feeding on the finest fare, fattening and feasting themselves every day, like the rich glutton, *Luk.* 16. 19.



Such Sensualists, that live in pleasure and wantonness St. James rebukes, James 5. 5. These are sins *Majoris adhaerentiae*, they are hardly shaken off; these

See the villainess of *Epicurus*, in *Ros's* against *Browns* vulgar Errors, p. 255. and *Cusperwells* Light of Nature, ch. 17. p. 185.

Against Luxury and Gluttony. See Mr. *Greenhill* on Ezek. 16. 13. Obs. 1. p. 183. and 16. 49. p. 280.

sensual Epicurean lusts do estrange the heart from God, close up the eye of the soul, emasculate the spirit, and unfit men for the service of God or man. Hence the Scripture so oft condemns them, *Dent.* 21. 20. *Eccles.* 10. 16, 17. *Luk.* 21. 34. *Rom.* 13. 13, 14. Wee should therefore carry weaned affections to these creature-enjoyments, and use

these things, as though we used them not. He that hath beds of Ivory, and lives in a Princely Palace, yet should carry such mortified affections to them, that if the Lord should call him to lye on a pad of straw in prison, he must be ready chearfully to do it. Grace it humbles a man, and makes him know his deserts; a good man that goes in Silks and Satins, yet can be thankful for Raggs (when God calls him to them) knowing that he is less than the least of all Gods mercies. We should therefore keep a watch over our hearts in our eating, drinking, sleeping, cloathing, for fear of excess. *Licetis perimus omnes.*

2. Ministers must not rest in Generals, but they must descend to particulars. 2. *Sam.* 12. 7.

When the Prophet had denounced a woe against those that were at ease in General, *vers.* 1. now he descends to Particulars, and tells them of the sins of their beds and boards, of their gluttony, drunkenness, sensuality, inhumanity, &c. This particular applying of the Word to the souls of people, is the onely way to convince and convert them; for what is spoken in general to all, few will apply particularly to themselves. This made the Prophets and Apostles to deal so plainly with their people, *Isa.* 58. 1. *Ezek.* 16. 2. *Mat.* 11. 21, 23. *Joh.* 4. 17, 18. *Act.* 2. 36, 37.

Be not then offended at the plain and powerful preaching of the Word. You will suffer the *Lawyer* to tell you of the flaws in your estates, the *Physician* to tell you of the diseases in your bodies, the *Watchman* to tell you of an approaching enemy; and will you not suffer the Minister to tell you of eternal dangers, that so you may prevent them?

3. Sins (especially great ones) seldome go alone,

Security

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 10. Obs. 2. p. 421.

Security went before, now followes Luxury, Sensuality, Drunkennes, and Inhumanity. As great men have great attendance, so great Sins have many followers; and as there is a concatenation of Vertues, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 7, 8. so there is a concatenation of Vices also, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3, 4, 5.

See my Com. on

2 Tim. 3. 2. p.

21, &amp;c.

## VERSE 5.

*That chaunt to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves instruments of Musick, like David.*

**T**He Prophet goes on, in aggravating the Sins of these loose, luxurious Rulers, who gave themselves up to mirth and merriment, to feasting, singing, and Musick, as if they had been continually at some Wedding, or celebrating some Feast to *Bacchus*; and that in a time of mourning, when Gods Wrath was upon the regions round about them, the inferiour people were in deep distress, and *Samaria* it self was ready to be made a prey by the cruel *Assyrian*; yet in this juncture of time, when they should have fallen to Prayers and Tears, they fall to mirth and merry-making, not bating an ace of their wonted pomp and pleasure; and therefore the Prophet goes on, in denouncing Gods Judgements against them, saying, *Woe to them that chaunt*, or quaver, as it is in the margin, *to the sound of the Viol*; They joyn their voyce to the Instrument, they play and sing.

Before they pleased their Palates, and now they delight their ears with Musical Instruments, that nothing might bee wanting to compleat their pleasures. *They sing to the mouth of the Viol* (so it is in the fountain) they curiously quaver, and sing their part in Confort; they form and frame their Tones, rising and falling according to the Tune, and Harmony of the Viol, or Psaltery, the word will bear both. It was an Instrument that was round and hollow, much like a bottle; and *Nebel* signifies a Bottle as well as a Viol. The Seventy call it Psalterion, and so the word is rendred, *Psal.* 33. 2. *Sing to the Lord with the Psaltery*, or Viol. Before they had luxurious feasts, and now they adde lascivious musick.

The better to Patronize their prophane Musick, they bring in *David* for their pattern. *They invent Instruments of Musick* like

*Quod exemplo  
fit, id jure fieri  
putant Cicero.*

like David. David was a great Master of Musick, he invented many Musical Instruments, which hee used in Spiritual praising of God, and raising of his Spirit in his Worship, 1 *Chro.* 23, 5. But these abused their Musick, to the satisfying of their sinful lusts and pleasures, and that in an unseasonable time; as if they would out-face God, and his Judgements, and their prosperity should never change. Under the Viol, Synecdochically is comprehended other Musical Instruments then in use, as Harps, Sackbuts, Organs, Timbrells, Trumpets, Cymbals, &c. under one kind the rest are comprized; so saith the text, *They invent to themselves Instruments of Musick.* They were not content with one or two sorts of Instruments, but they invent variety of them, the better to gratifie their lusts. Plaine Musick pleased not them, but they beat their brains to get the most curious Organs and Instruments that can be gained for love, or money. They set their heads, and their hearts to work, that they might find out wayes to please their lusts.

*Chasab, ex cogi-  
tatione, delibera-  
vit, consultavit.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

17. Polydor. Vir-  
gil. de Invent.  
Rerum. l. 1. c. 14.  
Weemse Chri-  
stian Synagog.  
ll. 6. p. 143.

1 *Abused Musick is displeasing to God.* Musick in it self is a good gift of God, *Gen.* 4. 21. and must be used to Gods glory, and not to gratifie our lusts. Epicures are all for mirth and Musick, for singing, feasting, dancing, and drinking, they have their portion in this life, and they care for no other.

Now Musick is abused  
when it is,

- 1 Excessive.
- 2 Unseasonable.
- 3 An incentive to Lust.
- 4 A promoter of Idolatry.

1 Musick is sinful when it is *Excessive*, when men give themselves up to mirth and Musick, neglecting the duties of their calling. These tempt the Temptor to destroy them, and sin against their owne Prayers, when they desire they may not be led into temptation, yet by such prophane courses they lead themselves into them.

2 When it is *unseasonable*; so here, in a time of mourning they fell to Musick, and drove the fear of God farre from them.

them. A woe is denounced against such, *Isa. 5. 11, 12.*

3 When it is made an *Incentive* unto Lust, and is used with drinking, dancing, feasting, dalliance and filthy Songs, jearing at Piery and pious men. Thus the Drunkards made Songs of *David*, *Psal. 69. 12.* and the Churches misery was their enemies musick, *Lam. 3. 63.* such kind of corrupt musick hath a great influence in corrupting mens manners.

*Salent resp. cum  
Musica mutari.  
Plato de legib.  
lib. 2.*

4 When it is used to promote *Idolatry*, *Exod. 32. 18.* *Dan. 3. 5.* *Amos 5. 23.* In Popery, the greatest part of their Divine Service is spent in Theatrical Musick, and singing of Anthems, where the peoples ears are tickled, but their hearts are never touched. *St. Austin* complains, that in his time hee was more taken with the Musick, than with the matter that was sung. Idolatry hath many props to uphold it, as the Authority of great men, glittering Pictures of Gold and Silver to please carnal eyes, and variety of Musick to tickle mens eares, and allure the ignorant, who have their minds in their eares, and are apt to admire what they never understand. They were Idolaters, who had the Corner, Flute, Harp, Sackbut, Psaltery, Dulcimer, and all kind of Musick in their Worship, *Dan. 3. 5.*

*V. D. Willet  
Synops. p. 683.  
Edit. ult.*

*Aug. Confess.  
l. 1. c. 33.*

Apostolical simplicity suites best with Gospel-worship. *It is not the custom of our Churches (saith Justin Martyr) to sing their Meeters with any such kind of Instruments, but their manner is only Plain-songs; and gives very good Reasons in the same place for it.*

*Justin Mart. Explic. Quæst. 2  
Gentibus postarum. Quæst. 107.  
p. 446. See more in an excellent  
seasonable Sermon of Mr. Pool on  
Joh. 4. 24. preached at Pauls, 1660.*

**Q.** But doe you condemn all manner of Musick?

**A.** No, for Musick it self is not unlawful, but the abuse of it. We must therefore distinguish of Musick.

1 There is a *grave, composed, pious Musick*, by which contemplation is promoted, the affections are moved, sadness is expelled, the spirits are raised and revived, composed and fitted for Gods Service and praise; and to this end the most pious and noble spirited men have used it; as *Moses*, *Exod. 15. Deborah*, *Judg. 5. Hezekiah*, *Isa. 38. 20. Jehosaphat*, *2 Chron. 22. 27, 28. the Levites*, *Nehem. 12. 27. 1 Chron. 9. 33. and the Saints*, *Revel. 14. 2, 3.* Thus *Elisha* called for a Minstrel, *2 King. 3. 15.* the better to quiet and compose his spirit, which had been disquieted by a wicked King; and to stir

*V. Cassiodor. l. 2.  
Epist. 40. Ari-  
stot. in Polit. l. 8  
c. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7.  
8. Plato de Rep.  
Dialog. 3.*

fit it up in praying and praising God, that so he might be the fitter for Prophecy, and the duties of his calling, and to receive what God should reveal unto him; and for this end the Prophets also used it, *1 Sam. 10. 5.* Thus *David* used it, and commanded it to be used in praising God, *2 Sam. 6. 5. 2 Chron. 5. 12. Psal. 150.* As prophane Musick delights the Devil, and lets him into the soul, so holy Musick and singing is like a scourge to drive Satan out of our hearts and houses. When the evil spirit vexed *Saul* with sadness and melancholy, *David* with his Harp helpt to drive it away, *1 Sam. 16. 23.*

2. *There is a light, loose, lustful, prophane, emasculating Musick*, whereby the corruptions which are in the heart are excited, and the fear of God is expelled. *Job* brings in the wicked with their Timbrel and Harp, rejoycing at the sound of the Organ, *Job 21. 12, 13.* Against such the Prophet denounceth a Woe, *Isa. 5. 11, 12.* and *24. 8, 9.*

*Hieron. Epif.*  
*10. ad Euziam.*

*Chrysost. Hom.*  
*42. in Acta.*

The Philosopher told the Fiddlers, that he could be merry without such musick, much more may Christians say so. — Sr. *Ferom* saith, *Let the singer be thrust out of thy house as noxious, expel out of thy doors all Fiddlers, Singing-women, with all this Quire of the Devil, as the deadly songs of Syrens.* So *Chrysostom*, *Cymbals, and Pipes, and filthy songs, are the very Pumps and Hodg-potch of the Devil.* *Antigonus*, Master to *Alexander* the Great, hearing his Scholar sing, he broke his Harp, and threw it away, saying, *Etati tua jam regnare convenit, non canere;* 'Tis time for you now to reign, and not to sing. The former sort of musick in private may be useful, but this latter sort is odious and abominable.

Obj. *We read of Harps, Timbrels, Organs, and other Instruments of musick used by the Jews in their publick worship of God, as appears by the Titles of many Psalms, Psal. 4. and 5. and 6. and 8, 45, 54, 60, 61, 67, 69, 70, 80, 81, 150. and therefore wee may use Musick now in Gospel-times.*

Ans. It doth not follow, for there were many Ceremonial Rites used in the time of the Law, which are abolished in the time of the Gospel, of which this is one. The Church was in its infancy in Old Testament-times, and therefore the Lord allured them to his worship by external Rites and Ceremonies, which by the coming of Christ are abolished, the Sub-

stance,

ſtance being come, the *Shadows* are gone. The Gospel calls for a plain, ſimple, ſpiritual worſhip, *John* 4. 23, 24.

As for the Muſick of the Temple, it was typical, and prefigured the joy of Gods people in the remiſſion of their ſins in Gospel-times.

There was both Precept and Preſident in the Old Teſtament for Muſick in the publick worſhip of God, *2 Chron.* 29. 25. and 2. 7, 6. But there is no Precept nor Preſident in all the New Teſtament for the uſe of Organs, or any Muſical Inſtruments in the publick worſhip of God in theſe Gospel-times, that ever I could ſee; They were not uſed in publick worſhip in the Primitive times, as I have ſhewed before out of *Juſtin Martyr*. Organs were brought into the Church (ſay ſome) by Pope *Vulſian*, or *Vuſellius*, about the year 680. Hee was a luſty Singer, and great Muſician, he brought Prick-long, Deſcant, and all kinde of pleaſant Melody into the Church; and the better to delight vain people, he joyned Organs to his ſinging. Thus was *Paul's* Preaching, and *Peter's* Praying turned into vain ſinging, and childiſh playing, to the great loſs of time, and utter undoing of many mens ſouls.

*Alredus* an Abbot in *Yorkſhire*, about the year 1160, inveys notably againſt *Popiſh Muſicians*. All types and figures now ceaſing (ſaith he) whence hath the Church ſo many Organs, and Muſical Inſtruments? To what purpoſe is that terrible blowing of Bellows, expreſſing rather the cracks of Thunder, than the ſweetneſs of a voice. To what purpoſe ſerves that contraction and inflection of the voice? This man ſings a baſe, that a ſmall tune, this a treble, that a divid, &c. So that poor people come not to an Oratory, but to a Theatre; not to pray, but to gaze about them; neither is that dreadful Maieſty feared before whom they ſtand, &c.

*Cornelius Agrippa* complaining of the men of his time, tells us, That it was more like the lowing of beaſts, than the voice of men; whiſt the Chorifters ney deſcant, like a ſort of Colts; others bellow a tenor, like a company of Oxen; others bark a Counter-point, like a kennel of Doggs; others roar a treble, like a ſort of Bulls; others grunts out a baſe, like a company of Hoggs; ſo that a ſoul, ill-favoured noiſe is made; but the matter is not underſtood. Thus he.

'Tis clear againſt the Rule, which commands, That all things

*V. de Cray Con-  
form. 1. chap.*

*26. p. 62.*

*Alexand. ab A-  
lex. lib. 4. c. 17.*

In his Specu-  
lum Charitatis,  
l. 2. c. 23.

*Pap. tus, totus  
Organis & Mu-  
ſicis cantibus  
perſtrepens, dat  
ſine mente ſo-  
num. Damus.*

In lib. de Vanis  
tar. Sciens. c. 17.

*Boanies potius  
quam Organus.  
Pet. Martyr.*



things should be done to edification, and with understanding;  
 1 Cor. 14. 19. but such a hideous noise breeds confusion, as  
 Faceffant superstitioſi boatus is apparent in Popery, and is condemned by all our learned  
 Papiſtarum, qui Modern Divines.  
 Pfalms in Tem-  
 plis reboantes

Muficæ Theatralis ſed lingua non intellecta tanto ſtrepitu & tumultu ut ſi mereretur lingua  
 Vernacula, nemo tamen quid ab illis dicatur intelligat. Pet. Martyr.

2. The Organs uſed by David differed much from ours;  
 Theirs were *uſſæ & Pulſatilia*, ſuch as the Harp, Viol, &c.

Organorum ſpecies huiusmodi eſt,  
 canora, cithara, decem chordis coop-  
 tata, & hac cum plectro percutitur.  
 Nabla verò duodecim ſonos habens,  
 digitis tangitur, & reliqua. Hinc  
 perſpicere licet iſtiusmodi Organa  
 à David conſecta, diverſa fuiſſe à  
 noſtris, &c. Polyd. Virgil. de In-  
 vent. Rerum. lib. 1. cap. 15. mibi  
 p. 52.

which they plaid upon with the Quill, or  
 with the fingers; they were not *curvæ*,  
*ſtatilia*, ſuch as our Organs are, which are  
 acted by wind. *Jabal* was called the Fa-  
 ther of ſuch as handle the Organ, Gen. 4.  
 21. hee was the firſt Inventor of Muſical  
 Inſtruments; where by the Organ is not  
 meant ſuch Organs as are uſed in our daies,  
 which were invented ſome thouſands of  
 years after, but 'twas an Inſtrument of joy

then in uſe, as appears. Job 21. 12. and 30. 31. Pſal. 150.

cantabat ſanis,  
 cantabat tibia  
 ludis, cantabat  
 meſſis tibia ſu-  
 meribus. Ovid.  
 Faſt. l. 6. V. De  
 Croy Conformit.  
 1. cb. 26.

4. De Croy fetcheth the Original of Church-Muſick from the  
 Heathen, it was praſtiſed in *Numa Pompilius* his time, which  
 was above one thouſand years before Pope *Vitalian*, as ap-  
 pears by *Ovid*.

Object. This is but ſome novel opinion of ſome Preſiſe per-  
 ſons.

Anſw. Such kinde of Church-Muſick was not uſed in the  
 Church, in *Juſtin Martyr*'s time, who lived in the firſt Cen-  
 tury. *Bellarmino* confeſſeth that for 820

Uſarm. de bonis operibus lib. 1. c.  
 17. V. Altare Damafceum. p. 290.  
 &c. Ex Bodinum in Epheſ. 5.  
 19. Ex Damascum de Preſatione  
 cap. 3. p. 618. folio. Et Tibeni  
 Synt. p. 793.

years after Chriſt, the Church wanted it.  
 Had ſuch Organical Muſick been neceſſary  
 and uſeful, in all probability it would have  
 found a ſpeedier admiſſion into the Church.  
 Hence 'tis that the wiſer ſort of Papiſts have  
 condemned it, as Judaizing. So did *A-*

*quinas*, and Cardinal *Cajetan* on *Aquinas*, and in his Commen-  
 tary on 1 Cor. 14. 19. and the Jeſuit *Salmeron* on the ſame  
 place. Yea the Jeſuit *de Valentia* tells us expreſſy, that in  
*Aquinas* his time, which was about 1275 years after  
 Chriſt,

Christ. Musical Instruments were not used in the Church, for fear least they should seem to Judaize. That curiosity of singing and quavering, so that the matter which is sung cannot be understood, is condemned by the Learned Hooker, and by Queen Elizabeth, Injunct. 49. and by the Homily of the Place and Time of Prayer, Part 2. p. 131. where such chaunting and playing on Organs, is said to have displeased God sore, and filthily defiled his house and place of prayer, and that for it justly hee destroyed many Nations; and if this kinde of worship were of absolute necessity, then not onely Cathedrals, but all Churches and Chappels were bound to get it. Latin service, I suppose, is abhorred by all, but this kinde of chaunting, when people know not whether men curse or bless, wherein is it better?

Caution, yet this must not take away Vocal Musick, which is still to be practised by Gods people in the solemn Assemblies. The melody of the heart and voice is the sweetest harmony in Gods ear. This is Apostolical, and is oft commanded 1 Cor. 14. 15, 26. Ephes. 5. 19. Col. 3. 16. James 5. 13. 'Twas practised by Christ himself, Mat. 26. 30. and by the Primitive Christians in Trajan the Emperours time, whilst St. John the Evangelist lived. When ever the people of God received any signal mercy, they presently framed it into a song of praise, that they might the better remember it.

Numb. 31. 17. Dent. 31. 19. Judg. 5. Yea many portions of Scripture were put into songs, as the book of Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Solomons Song. Singing of Psalms is an antient Ordinance practised by Saints, both in the Old and New Testament. Holy singing is an excellent means to scatter the Devils temptations, to assuage passions, and to make us courageous in Gods wayes. When wee are dull and heavy, this is a means to quicken our affections, and refresh our spirits. Be not drunk with Wine, but be filled with the Spirit. How? by singing of spiritual songs in a spi-

St 2

*Musica Instrumenta magis animum impunt ad delectationem, quam per ea formetur interius bona dispositio. In veteri autem Testamento usus erat talium Instrumentorum quia populus erat magis durus & carnalis; unde erat per huiusmodi Instrumenta provocandus, sicut & per promissiones terrenas, tum etiam quia per huiusmodi Instrumenta corporalia aliquid figurabatur. Aquinas 2o. 2e. q. 91. art. 2. Hooker Eccles. Polit. p. 259.*

*Quinque metris constant, Job, David, tres Solomonis. Greg. Nazian.*

*Simplex carnis cogitationes malas amolitur, mentem ad fructificationem divinarum rigat, Pietatis decretatores generosos & fortes per constantiam in rebus adversis efficit; omnium rerum quae in vita tristes accidunt, piis offert medicinam Iusti Martyr. Quaes. 1. ad Oribad. 107. mibi p. 461.*

ritual

ritual manner, *Ephes. 5. 18, 19.* Paul and Silas the better to quicken and comfort themselves in Prison, sing Psalmes there, *Acts 16. 25.* In the Psalmes that is intituled for the Sabbath, *Psal. 92. 1, 2.* the Psalmist tells us, *it is good to praise the Lord, and to sing to the name of the most high.* God delights to see his people practise this Ordinance, he is not only pleased with the Prayers, but also with the Praises of his people; and gives them victory not only for Prayers, but for Praises also, *2 Chron. 20. 21, 22.* When the Ark was brought into the Temple with singing, it is said, *The glory of the Lord filled the house, 2 Chron. 5. 13.*

Woe then to those that glory in their shame, viz. in singing prophane, filthy, obscene Songs; but are ashamed of their glory, viz. of singing the Songs of *Sion*, which is not only our duty, but our glory; not a burden, but a blessing; not only a service, but an Angelical priviledge; yet how many dare not sing a Psalm in their Families, for fear of reproach and suffering? Christ will be ashamed of such as are ashamed of him, and his Worship, and will shut them out of Heaven, that fear men more than him, *Mark 8. ult. Revelations 21. 8.*

We must begin our Heaven here, if ever we will sing with the Saints in glory hereafter, *Revel. 14. 3. & 15. 3.* They that will not sing here, must howl hereafter. Our Tongues are called our glory, and we cannot use them better, than in glorifying God with them.

That we may perform this Duty rightly,

- Wee must doe it {  
 1 Understandingly.  
 2 Affectionately.  
 3 Religiously.  
 4 Decently.

1 We must sing with the Spirit, and with understanding, *Psal. 47. 7. 1 Cor. 14. 15.* Many sing, but understand not a word of what is Sung. God abhors such blind sacrifices. It is reasonable service that he requires, *Rom. 12. 1.*

2 Affectionately, with grace in the heart, *Col. 3. 16.* that is, we must exercise the graces of the Spirit in singing, wee must sing with joy, faith, fear. We must act the graces of the Spirit in singings, when we sing of Judgements, we must tremble,

ble, when of *Promises*, beleave; when of *Commandments*, obey. This is to sing *Dauids* Psalmes with *Dauids* Spirit. Get your spirits tuned, and framed to what is Sung, that it may not be a Carnal, but a Spiritual Song. Hence *David* used to tune, and prepare his heart before he sang, *Psal.* 57. 8, 9. *Non aliud cogites, & aliud canes. Bern.* Heart and Voyce must goe together. Singing with Musick in Publick was Ceremonial, and Typical, it is now gone; but singing with Heart and Voyce is Moral, and perpetual. Wee should therefore labour rather to get our hearts affected with the matter, than our ears and senses with the manner of singing.

3 *Religiously*. To the Lord, and not to Saints must we sing praise, and it must be done (as all other Duties) with reverence, as in Gods presence.

4 *Decently*. As all other Duties must be done decently, and in order, so must this, *1 Cor.* 11. *ult.* As all curiosity, Quavering, and Vain-descants must be avoyded; so rudeness, disorder, and confusion must be shunned. We must observe the Tune, and joyn all together as one man in the Duty, as those Singers did, *2 Chron.* 5. 13. with the voyce all together must we sing unto God, *Esay* 52. 8. *Non est strepitus ois, sed jubilus cordis, non sonus labiorum, sed motus gaudiorum; voluntatum, non concordantia. Bern.*

[See more about singing of Psalmes, and all Cavils answered, by Master *Cotton*, in his Treatise for singing of Psalmes: and Mr. *Sydnam*, in his Treatise of Infants Baptism, p. 165. Mr. *Manton* on *James* 5. 13. *Downams* Guide to Godliness, l. 3. c. 17. p. 240. Mr. *Ambrose* his Media. p. 259. M. *Eaton* against the Quakers, p. 25. *Clapham* against the Quakers, in the end of his Treatise against them. Mr. *Philip Goodwin*, in his Family-Religion, p. 269, &c. Mr. *Sam. Cradocks* Knowledge and Practise, Part 2. Cha. 6. p. 340. *Zanchy* in *Ephes.* 5. 19, 20.]

2 *Obf.* Wicked men are apt to abuse the Practices, and Examples of Gods people.

Sometimes they take offence, and stumble at their infirmities, and falls, which should be a means to keep them from falling. Sometimes they imitate their good actions, but then they do it in an evil manner, and to an evil end; if *David* dance before the Ark, then the wicked will dance before *Dagon*, and wrest that purely zealous act of *David*, to Patronize mixt dancing. If *David* set up Musick to praise God, they will set up *nautem. Greg.*

up Musick to please their Lusts. They had Musick here like *David*, but they had not the heart of *David*. They had the matter, but they failed in the manner. They abused *David's* example, for though he was a great Musician, a Master of Musick, and the sweet Singer of *Israel*; yet all his Musick was not for Carnal, but Spiritual pleasure; to fit him the better to praise God, and to meditate upon his works.

Two men may doe one and the same thing, and yet not be the same; because it comes not from one and the same Principle, nor tends to the same end. *Cain* and *Abel* both offer Sacrifice, yet from different Principles, and with different acceptation, *Gen. 4. 3*. The Pharisee, and the Publican, both pray, the one hollowly, the other heartily, *Luke 18. 10*, wicked men may doe the very same work, which good men doe *Materially*, but *formally* and *finally* they differ much. *David* here used Musick *piously*, but these Epicures *prophanely*. *David* was bettered by it, and his affections were raised Heavenward; but these were corrupted by their Musick, and their hearts made more sensual and base.

VERSE 6, 7.

*That drink Wine in bowls, and anoynt themselves with the chief Oynments, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*

*Therefore they shall goe Captive with the first that goe Captive, and the banquet of them that stretch themselves shall be removed.*

**T**He Prophet goes on with his Charge against the Grandees, and Rulers of *Judah* and *Israel*. In this Verse he chargeth them with Apostacy, Inhumanity, and want of compassion to their distressed brethren. The whole Land was over-run, and exposed to the mercy of merciles men; but because themselves were safe in their fenced Cities, viz. *Jerusalem* and *Samaria*, they lightly regarded the afflictions of others; but instead of mourning with such as mourned, they drunk Wine in bowls, and drowned themselves in sensual delights.

So that we have here a further amplification, and fuller description of their Luxury,

1. *They drink Wine in bowls.*

2. They anoynt themselves with the chief Oyntments.

3. Which highly aggravates their Sin, they did all this in a time of sorrow, even when *Joseph*, that is, their Brethren and relations round about them were in deep distress, but they were not at all affected, or afflicted with it.

*They drink Wine in bowls.*

They made it their Trade so to doe. The Participle of the Present Tense notes a continued act. They

drunk not Wine in ordinary Cups, Beakers content not them, they must have Bowls; and those not ordinary ones, but large and capacious Vials and Vessels, Silver or Golden Goblets like Basons; for so the word *Mizrak* is used, for such Vials or Basons as used to carry the blood of the Sacrifices to the Altar, where it was poured out, *Exod. 27. 3. Numb. 7. 13. 1 King.*

*7. 40. Zach. 14. 20.* They drunk by measure out of measure, they were so addicted to drinking, that they could scarce find Vessels bigge enough to satisfy their lusts.

*They anoynt themselves with the chief Oyntments.*

In those hot Eastern Countries the *Jewes* were wont to anoynt themselves (especially at Feasts) with sweet smelling Oyl, and other sweet Oyntments, to express their joy and cheerfulness, and for the refreshment and consolidation of their Limbs. With it they anoynted their Members, and specially their Head, for the preserving of health, and reviving of the spirits; hence those Aromatical Oyntments were of great esteem amongst the *Jewes*, as being a special part of their treasure, *1 Sam. 8. 13. 2 King. 20. 13.* The thing was lawful in it self, and therefore we find it commanded by Christ, *Matth. 6. 17.* and practised by holy Persons, as *Ruth 3. 3. David, 2 Sam. 12. 20. & 14. 2. Psal. 23. ult. Hezekiah, 2 King. 20. 13.* Hence our Saviour justified the Woman that anoynted his feet with Oyntment,

*Luke 7.*

*Habassin, bibentes, from Sharah, bibit, convivatus est, quia in convivis largiter bibi solet. V. Schools Guard, Rule 56.*

*Mizrak, pelves sparsoria, phiala sive crateres, ex quibus asperisiones fiebant. Hinc Mizrak, a spargendo deducitur, & proinde vas parvum, amplum, & capax admodum significat. Gualter in locum.*



*Luke 7. 46.* And another that poured a box of precious Oynment upon his head, *Mat. 26. 7. to 13.* 'Twas used much by the Jews at their Feasts and Funerals, *Luk. 23. 56.* but now in Gospel-times, and especially in our cold Countries, 'tis out of use.

\* *Non est eorum  
usus omnino ex-  
pellendus, sed  
unguento tan-  
quam medica-  
mento, & auxi-  
lio utendum est,  
ad vires lan-  
guentes exci-  
tandas. Terbul.  
Pedagog. lib. 2.  
cap. 8.*

\* *Reshith (from  
Resh caput)  
Sbemanim pri-  
mitis oleorum ungunt sese, i. e. lectissimo &  
præstantissimo unguentorum, idque ad luxum  
non ad munditiam aut sanitatem.*

The thing in it self was good, for God gives \* Wine and Oyl to delight us, *Psal. 104. 15. Job 29. 6. Prov. 27. 9.* And therefore the Prophet doth not here simply condemn the use, but the abuse of these things. He blames them for their riot and excess; they must have Wine in great bowls; and the \* *first* or top of the Oyl, that is, they must have the best and costliest Oynment, not for necessity, but for luxury and lust, and that in a time when Gods judgements were on the Regions round about them, and many were gone into captivity; yet they are not at all moved with it, but go on securely in their mirth and merriment, without any sympathy of the afflictions of *Joseph*, for so it follows.

*But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph.*

*Nechlus, from  
Chulab, doluit,  
ægotavit, ani-  
mo tristis fuit.*

This *But* is a sore blot upon them, let *Joseph* sink or swim, yet they are not broken in spirit for the breaches of *Joseph*; they have no pain, fellow-feeling, or heart-grief for the oppression of their brethren, or for those calamities past or present, which were upon them.

*Gnal Sheber,  
pro confractio-  
ne Joseph, i. e. po-  
puli Israelitici.  
Met. effc. &  
Syn. partis.*

Some take this affliction to be that particular breach, and great rupture which the *Syrians* made amongst them, when they had broken them to shivers (as the word imports) as appears, *2 King. 13. 4. 22. and 14. 26.* Their affliction was bitter, for there was none shut up, nor any help left; many were slain, and many carried into captivity.

Though this be a truth, yet 'tis better taking the words in a larger sense, viz. for all those afflictions which the house of *Joseph* suffered (which was a type of the Church) by their corrupt Judges at home, and by the cruel *Syrians*, and merciless *Assyrians*, abroad. They had endured much already, and were like to suffer more; yet these secure, vicious, voluptuous Rulers laid it not to heart.

By *Joseph* here, is more especially meant the Ten Tribes, or the whole Kingdome of *Israel*, so the word is used, *Pſal.* 77. 15. and 80. 1. *Amos* 5. 6, 15. Hear O thou Shepherd of *Israel*, i. e. of the Ten Tribes, which are synecdochically called *Joseph*. 1. In respect of Dignity, and the right of Primogeniture, which was taken from *Reuben*, and given to *Joseph*, the best of *Jacob*'s sons, and a principal Patriarch, *Gen.* 48. 16, 22. *1 Chron.* 5. 1. 2. Because of *Jeroboam*, the first King of the Ten Tribes, who was of the posterity of *Joseph*. 3. The Prophet seems to allude to the history of *Joseph*, who was cast into a pit by his brethren, and after sold to the *Midianites* for a slave, his brethren in the mean time, eating, drinking, feasting, and little regarding the misery and anguish that *Joseph* was in, *Gen.* 37. 23, 24, 25, 27.

*Joseph, pro quo vis fratre hic ponitur, quia inter fratres Joseph fuit celebris, vel propter mala*

*qua pendit, vel propter bona qua rependit. Aug. de Doct. Christi. lib. 4. cap. 7.*

The summe of all is this, *Though your Brethren, the seed of Joseph, be in great distress, and even broken in peeces with Violence and oppression, which might have made them even sick with sorrow; yet such is your inhumanity, that you have given up your selves to all Intemperance and sensual delights, pouring down Wine out of your carousing-cups, and anointing your selves with the most precious and fragrant Ointments, without any minding of your brethrens miseries, or once regarding their doleful condition.*

# OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Voluptuous men spare for no cost or pains to gratifie their lusts.*

These men sent to *India* for Ivory; to the folds for the fat-telt; they provided musick to please the ear, odoriferous perfumes and oynements for the smell; the fat and sweet for their palats, and fine beds for their lusts. Here is all for self, nothing for God that gives all, he is not in any of their thoughts, *Isa.* 57. 8, 9. When the Kingdome of Heaven should suffer violence by them, they are violent for sin; they lavish gold out of the bag for it, *Isa.* 46. 6. every one acts in his spear for Idols; *The Children gather wood, the Fathers kindle the fire, and the Women knead the dough,* *Jer.* 7. 18. so great is their affection to Idolatry, that every one in

*Ostiosus nemo in amantis domo. Gen. 18. 6, 7, 8.*

the family confers something, and acts that part which is most proper for him; 'tis for Children to gather sticks, for men to make the fire, and Women to bake; The like industry for Idols, we may see, *Isa.* 41. 7. and 44. 12, 13, 14. Wicked men delight only in sensual things, which makes them so active for them. They delight in eating, drinking, anointing, in silk, fardins, purple, pearls, marble, &c. See what a shop of such wares mystical *Babylon* hath, *Rev.* 18. 12, 13, 14. Great men have many great advantages of good education, wealth, time, power and reputation, which they should improve to the donors glory, and not fight against God with his own Treasure. As is excellently set forth in that elaborate Tract, titled, The Gentlemans Calling.

2. *Ministers must have a special eye upon the manners of their people.*

See how the Prophet here chargeth this people with their excessive and inordinate eating, drinking, anointings, musick, &c. If a Minister do but touch upon these things, how apt are people to cry, what? may we not eat, drink, and play as we please? no, you may not; for you may perish by the use of lawful things, if you use them unlawfully.

We Ministers are *Watchmen*, and must see that our people go not astray in manners, as well as in doctrine; and therefore when the Prophet *Isaiah* had reprov'd the men for their sins, hee then sets forth his Looking-glass for women, *Isa.* 3. 16, &c. and gives us an Inventory of the females vanity, setting them forth in their colours from top to toe.

3. *There is a woe hangs over the heads of drunkards.*

Woe to them that drink Wine in bowls, till they have besotted themselves, and are made insensible of Gods judgements on themselves and others. Every Prophet hath a woe against such. *Woe*, saith *Isa* chap. 5. 11, 12. And, *Woe*, saith *Joel* chap. 2. 5. And, *Woe*, saith *Habakkuk*, chap. 2. 15, 16. Drunkenness blots the name, consumes the body, and destroys the soul, as I have shewed at large elsewhere.

4. *Lawful things when abused become unlawful.*

Feasting in it self is lawful, but feasting in a time of mourning is unlawful. Wine and Oyle are things in themselves lawful, and may be used moderately for necessity and delight, to refresh and fit us for the service of God, but not for Luxu-

See my Com.  
on 1 Tim. 3. 3.  
p. 92, 93, &c.

See my Com.  
on 1 Tim. 3. 3.  
p. 90, &c.

ry, *Judg.* 9. 13. *Pfal.* 104. 15. 1 *Tim.* 5. 23. Thus the Saints used them ( as I have shewed before in the Explication ) but to abuse them to lust and luxury, is a great provocation, *Prov.* 7. 17. *Ezek.* 23. 41.

3. *Luxury brings forth cruelty.*

Where riot and excess go before, there cruelty, inhumanity, oppression, and contempt of Gods people follows. This wee see in the *Sodomites*, *Ezek.* 16. 49. And those voluptuous wantons, *James* 5. 5, 6. As piety makes men pitiful, hence good men are called *Chafidim*, *misericordes*, merciful men; such was *David*, *Job*, *Zachens*, &c. so impiety breeds cruelty, as we see in *Nabal*, *Dives*, &c. So true is that of *Pythagoras*; first (saith he) *Pleasures and pastimes creep into Cities*, *Apad. Laert. lib. 7.* then *luxury and saturity*, after that *violence and cruelty*, and then *destruction*. Hence *Solomon* condemns luxury especially in Great ones, as that which makes them pervert judgement, *Prov.* 31. 4. *Eccles.* 10. 16.

6. *To be feasting in a time of fasting, and singing in a time of sorrowing, is a God-provoking-sin, Isa. 22. 13. Joel 1. 16, 17. James 5. 1, 5.*

Here is a woe set upon the heads of those that laugh when *Sion* weeps, for this woe must be applied to all that went before, *Vers.* 1, 3, 4, 5, 6. *Woe to them that are at ease in Sion, but they are not grieved for the afflictions of Joseph.* *Woe to them that eat, and drink, and sing, but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph;* This is the burden of this doleful Dicty, that they did not mourn in a time of mourning, nor once take notice of Gods anger, which yet they could nor but see was kindled round about them, and ready to seize upon them, as it did suddenly after. Many are so stupid, that they will not bate a lust or a pleasure, though Gods people be in never so deep distress; like the King and *Haman*, that late sporting and carousing, when Gods people were in great perplexity, *Hess.* 3. ult. To such I may say, as *Elisha* said to *Gehezi*, 1 *King.* 5. 26. *Is this a time to receive gifts and garments, Olive-yards and Vineyards? the Leprosie therefore of Naaman shall cleave to thee, and to thy seed for ever.* So say I, Is this a time to drink healths, to rant, to dance, and roar, when the Church of God, like *Joseph*, is sold, imprisoned, massacred, and murdered? Will not the Lord visit for these things, and shall not

his soul bee avenged on such a Nation as this?

7. *God takes notice of our sins of omission, as well as of our sins of commission.*

'Tis not sufficient that we do not oppress or spoil Gods people, but 'tis our sin, and we must answer for it, if we be not grieved when they grieve, and weep not when they weep. *Dives* did not rob *Lazarus*, but he went to Hell for not relieving him, *Luk. 16. 29, &c.* and at the last day men must answer, not onely for oppressing the poor, but for not succouring them, and sympathizing with them, *Mat. 25. 41, 42.* No praying, no reading, no hearing, may bring a man to Hell, as well as an irreverent and formal performance of these duties.

8. *'Tis our duty to sympathize with Gods people in their miseries.*

God hates altoicall apathy; he commands us to remember those that are in bonds, as bound with them, *Heb. 13. 3.* And to weep with them that weep, as well as to rejoyce with them that rejoyce, *Rom. 12. 15.* And to shew pity and compassion to our Brethren, *Zach. 7. 8, 9, 10.* *1 Pet. 3. 8.* And as 'tis commanded, so 'tis commended to us by the Example of Gods servants, who have over-look't their personal comforts, when the publick hath sate in sorrow. Thus *Moses*, though he lived at Court amidst all the delights of *Egypt*, yet hearing that Gods people were in distress, hee leaves all, and joyns himself to the people of God, *choosing rather to suffer affliction with them, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*, *Heb. 11. 24, 25.* *Hester* so far sympathized with Gods people in their misery, that she ventured her life for their preservation. Good *Mordecai* was very much troubled at their troubles, *Hest. 4. 1, 2.* and gracious *Nehemiah*, though he was cup-bearer to the King, lived at Court, and wanted for nothing, yet see how deeply hee was affected with the afflictions of Gods people, *Neh. 1. 4, &c.* So holy *Daniel* searching the Prophecies of *Jeremiah*, and thereby fore-seeing the calamities that were coming on the Church, though himself were advanced to honour, and made a chief President of the whole State; yet he could not but mourn, even till he fainted again with sorrow, and was sick, *Dan. 8. 27, and 9. 3. and 10. 2, 3.* Thus honest-hearted *Uriah* denied himself in point of lawful liberties, and cannot rest nor sleep at home in peace, when the Ark and *Israel* are in danger, *2 Sam. 11. 11.* *Jeremy* was a

See more in Mr.  
Brinslys Ser. on  
Psal. 14. ult. &  
Mr. Cuse on  
Psal. 94. 12.  
p. 56, 7, &c.

When the Emperor bid *Tertullian* ask what he pleased, and hee should have it; *Templum petit pro Orthodoxis.*

man

man of large affections this way, *Jer. 9. 1. and 13. 17. and 30. 7.* and writes a whole Book of *Lamentations* for the Church. *David*, though himself had many troubles, yet in the midst of them all hee desires the Lord to redeem *Israel* out of all its troubles, *Psal. 25. ult.* And desires an heavy imprecation against himself, if he prefer not *Jerusalem* to his chiefest joy, *Psal. 137. 5, 6.* Hee owns Gods Church; and sides with her, and prayes for her, though she were in *Babylon*, *vers. 1, 7.* *Paul* had a care of all the Churches, and wishech their prosperity in every place, and could be content to be accursed, so they might be blessed, *Rom. 1. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 11. 26.* We have two notable instances for this purpose in *Eli*, and the wife of *Phinehas*, *1 Sam. 4. 18.* *Israel* is fled before the Philistims, that was one stab. 2. There is a great slaughter amongst the people, that is a second. 3. Thy two sons are slain, that is a third. But when he heard that the Ark of God was taken, it broke his heart, and his neck together. So the wife of *Phinehas*, the death of her Father-in-Law, and the death of her Husband, must needs affect her, but the loss of the Ark affects her more nearly, and therefore she doubles that, *The glory is departed from Israel, and the Ark of God is taken;* and she names her childe *Ichabod*, that is, *there is no glory*, seeing the Ark, which was the glory of *Israel*, and a sign of Gods special presence amongst his people, was gone, she took pleasure in nothing, *q. d. All the glory and excellency of Israel is now taken away from us, since the Ark is gone, which brought such glory and renown to Israel.*

Christ himself; how tender was he over his Church and People? he comforts them, he counsels them, and before he dyes, he makes an excellent prayer for them, *Joh. 14. 15, 16, 17.* Many will be companions with Gods People in their Exaltation, but *St. John* was their companion and brother-even in affliction, *Rev. 1. 9.*

Gods People are men of publick spirits; they serve not themselves, but God and his Church in their Generation, *Alt. 13. 3, 6.* *Paul* spent himself for the People of God. They can pass thorow honour and dishonour, profit and disprofit, be any thing or nothing, so God may be glorified, and his People edified. They are living members of Christs mystical body; now 'tis natural for the members of the body to



seek the good of each other, and if one member suffer, all the rest sympathize.

Besides, *the Church is near and dear to God*, and therefore ought to be precious in our eyes; it is his *Benjamin*, *Joseph* loved all his Brethren, but he loved *Benjamin* with a more intensive love, and provides a double Mess for him. God loves all his Creatures, but his Church is his *Sponse*, his *Love*, his *Glory*, *the apple of his eye*; he reproves Kings for their sakes, and plagues Nations for opposing them, as *Egypt*, *Moab*, *Ammon*, *Edom*, *Tyre*, &c. In all their afflictions he is afflicted, and if the poorest Saint suffer, their head is presently sensible of it. *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Now as the Church is dear to God, so it is to the People of God, who in their degree and measure doe imitate their heavenly Father, sympathizing with his people in their distresses. We all prize excellent things, now the godly are the only excellent ones of the earth, *Psal. 16. 3.* They are of the *Blond Royal*; Christ is flesh of their flesh, he hath made them Kings, and Priests: No Pedigree like the Churches Pedigree, *She is Jerusalem above*, and is the Mother that nurseth and feedeth us all with the Bread of Life, *Gal. 4. 26.* They are the pillars of the earth, the stay and strength of Nations; as *Sampsons* strength lay in his hair, so the strength of Kingdoms lies in these. *Lot* was a means to preserve *Sodom*, and till he was gone out of it, it could not be destroyed, *Gen. 19.* The world endures for their sakes, and fares the better for them every day. So long as the Chaff is mixt with the Wheat, it is preserved from burning, but when the Wheat is gone, the Tares are soon consumed. These are precious in Gods eye; their *Persons* are precious, *Mal. 3. 17.* their *Prayers* are precious, *Cant. 2. 14.* their *Tears* are precious, *Psal. 56. 8.* their *Desires* are precious, *Psal. 10. 17.* their *Names* are precious, and their *Death* is precious, *Psal. 112. 6. & 116. 15.*

Now if we must pray for all men, even for *Pagans*, then much more for these precious ones; if we must pray for our enemies, *Math. 5. 44.* and must be affected with their miseries, *Psal. 35. 13, 14.* then much more for our friends. If the Prophet wept for *Moab*, and *Babylon*, what should wee doe for *Zion*? *Esay 16. 11.* and if *Abraham* were so importunate for wicked *Sodom*, and all the people must lament for

*Nadab,*

*Nadab*, and *Abihu*, two notorious wicked men, who perished for their Sin, *Levit. 10. 6.* how tender should we be of *Sion*? and if we must sympathize, and be sensible of the sorrows of a particular good man, *Job 2. 13.* how much more when a community of good men suffers? And if Gods Servants have been affected with Impendent Judgements, that were but in the Clouds, and as farre off, how should we bee affected with the present miseries of Gods people? When *Elisha* fore-saw the evil that *Hazeal* would doe to *Israel*, some years after, he wept; and *Daniel*, ch. 8. 11, 12, 13. fore-seeing the misery which would come upon *Jerusalem* two hundred years after his death: he was even sick with sorrow, *vers. 27.* How would those Saints have wept in our dayes, to have seen these present, real evils, which press, and oppresse the people of God.

To incourage us, let us know that this work never goes unrewarded. God takes the kindness we shew to his people as done to himself, he is fed, when they are fed, *Matth. 25. 35, 36.* The *Kenites* kindness unto *Israel* was rewarded four hundred years after, *1 Sam. 15. 6.* Wee never please God better, than when we seek the good of his people; though we forget such labour of love, yet he will not, *Heb. 6. 10.* *Laban* was blest for *Jacobs* sake, and *Pharaoh* for *Josephs*; *Rahab* that hid the Spies, was hid her self; *Obadiab*, that sheltered the Prophets of the Lord, was himself sheltered by God, *Ebedmelech* for the kindness which he shewed to *Jeremy*, had his life for a prey. God hath a Book of remembrance, wherein he records all that we doe for him, or his, *Mal. 3. 16.*

How sad then is the condition of those that are senseless, and regardless of *Sions* miseries? So themselves can but live in wealth and ease, they never regard the afflictions of *Joseph*; like *Gallio*, they care for no such matters. Christ looks upon such Luke-warm Newters as his profest enemies, he that is not with him is against him, *Matth. 12. 30.* and *Meroz* was cursed, not for hurting, but for not helping Gods people in their troubles, *Judg. 5. 23.* and so was *Edom*, *Obad. 21, 12, 13, &c.*

Against such,  
see six Reasons  
in Mr. Gatakers  
Serm on Amos  
6. 6. p. 59, &c.  
2<sup>d</sup> Part, folio.  
And M. Pringle  
his Ser. on Psa.  
125. 4 p. 215  
&c.

But most sad is the condition of those, that instead of praying for Gods people, they persecute them, and adde affliction to the afflictions of those whom he hath wounded. These may forget

See my Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 12.  
p. 218, &c.

forget their owne cruelty, but God will not; he hath not only said, but sworn it, that he will not forget their cruelty, *Amos* 8. 7. He punisht *Amalek* four hundred years after, for his inhumanity towards *Israel*, *1 Sam.* 15. 2, 3. In all Ages God hath shewed himself terrible to such, he will spoyle the spoylers of his People. If *Pharaoh* pursue *Israel*, God will pursue him. If *Edom* shed *Israel's* blood, God will have *Edom's* blood, *Ezek.* 35.

See four Duties  
which God re-  
quires of us in  
his peoples  
troubles. Gata-  
ker on *Amos* 6.  
6. p. 63, 64.

Let us then every one sympathize with *Sion*, and give the Lord no rest, till he make our *Jerusalem* the praise of the earth, *Isa.* 62. 1. Every one in his place must help, and doe something for Gods afflicted *Joseph*. Those that can pray, must pray; those that are in Power and Authority, and have parts, must assist in their places; Souldiers that can fight, must fight for Gods Church. At the building of the Tabernacle every one did something. In the body Natural, each part is serviceable to the head. The Church of Christ throughout the Christian World is in deep distress, and cries as the men of *Macedonia* did, *Come, and help us*. Let us therefore by our Prayers, and Tears, come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty. Inquire how it fares with *Sion* (as *Eli* and *Nemiah* did, *1 Sam.* 4. 13. *Neh.* 1. 2.) and then pray for them accordingly, *Psal.* 122. 6. *Isa.* 45. 11. *Jer.* 51. 50. Get affectionate desires, *Psal.* 14. ult. *Isa.* 64. 1. Affectionate prayers, *Psal.* 25. ult. & 51. 18. and Affectionate endeavours in your places, as Magistrates, Ministers, &c. for the good of *Sion* here, and then you shall rejoyce with *Sion* hereafter.

#### VERSE 7.

*Therefore shall they goe Captive with the first that goe Captive, and the banquet of them that stretched themselves shall be removed.*

**W**E have before seen the Sin of the Rulers of *Israel*, we are now come to the several branches of their Punishment, whereof the first is Captivity, and deportation out of their owne Land. The Lord had borne long with them, and waited many years for their returne, but they abused his Patience, and turned his grace into wantonness, and therefore

fore now he is resolved to put an end to all their Pastimes and pleasures.

In this Verse we have, 1. A Judgement threatened; and that is Captivity, *Thy shall goe into captivity.*

2 Here are the Persons which must goe into Captivity; and those are the secure Grandees, and Voluptuous Rulers of Israel, *They shall goe Captive with the first that goe Captive*, of the Inhabitants of those Cities, for the Country was spoyled, and many of them captivated before. But the Rulers who were the prime offenders, and had been first in sin, should now bee first in punishment. They shall have the primacy amongst the Captives, they shall goe in the front of them, and lead them the way into Captivity. As in Dignity and Luxury they went before others; so now they shall have preceedency in Punishment; as you may see, *2 King. 17.* Before they were all for the head of the Oyntments, and now they should have the head in Punishment. They must have the head and chief delights, and now they shall have the head and chief of sorrows.

3 Here is the Time when they should goe into Captivity, and that is suddenly. *Now shall they goe, i. e.* it shall not be long, but the Assyrian shall carry them out of their owne Land into Captivity; in Gods due time it shall come to pass. It was about sixty years after that the Captivity came, which was but a short time comparatively, it is said even now to come upon them, because Gods decrees are sure, and what he determines to doe, is as sure as if it were already done. Thus to shew the certainty of *Babylons* downfall, it is said, *Babylon is fallen, Revel. 14. 8.* that is, It shall as certainly be destroyed, as if it were already done. Her fall is decreed by God, and is already begun in the hearts of Gods people, and shall from henceforth be more and more advanced, till it be utterly destroyed. So the Lord had decreed the Captivity of this People, and exercised them with variety of Afflictions, by the *Syrians*, and *Assyrians*, till at last they were carried out of their owne Land.

4 Here is an Exegesis, or further illustration of their misery, and the banquet of them that stretch themselves (shall be removed). The Prophet alludes to those before, *vers. 4th.* who wantonly stretch themselves upon their beds of Ivory, q. d.

*Gnath, pro-  
pedem brevi,  
opportuna q. d.  
propter peccata  
nunc imminet  
Pena.*

*V. Schools  
Guards, Rule 16.*

Those luxurious, lazie wantons, that gave themselves up to feasting and banqueting, to ryot and lasciviousness, shall have their mirth turned into mourning, and their Organs into the voyce of them that weep.

*Their Banquet shall be removed.* It is a Meiosis, i. e. all their jollity, pride, and pleasure shall be taken from them, and instead thereof destruction and misery shall pursue them; so that they shall have neither minde, nor Money to make Feasts, who were wont to spend all upon their backs and bellies.

The words are rendred by some, thus, *And the sorrow of them that stretcht themselves is at hand.* This comes from the various rendring of two words in the Original, the first is the word *Mirzach*, which the Vulgar render *Falston*, but without any ground at all; others, *Sorrow*; but the word properly signifies a Funeral-feast, for in those dayes they had feasts at Burials, as well as at Bridals, *Jer. 16. 7.* The word is used but in one place more in all the Scripture, and that is, *Jerem. 16. 5.* Enter not into the house of mourning; or as the Margin renders it, goe not to the Mourning-feasts, or Banquets which were wont to be kept with abundance of riot, pomp, and jollity. These Funeral-Feasts were first ordained for the comforting of such as grieved for the loss of their friends by death, but these here abused them to wantonness, and excess.

*Mirzach, est convivium funebre in exequiis mortuorum, ad consolandum propinquos mortui parari solitum, à Lap. V. Leigh. crit. fac. Heb. in V. Razch. p. 228. folio. Sur, accedere, recedere, removere.*

The other word which causeth this diversity, is the word *Sur*, which signifies to approach, or to depart, it is here taken in the latter sense, according to our Translation; *The banquet of them that stretcht themselves shall be removed*, q. d. all your mirth and merriment shall cease, and yee shall be carried Captive into a strange Land.

5 Here is the ground of all their sorrow, and suffering, included in the Illative Particle, *Therefore*, therefore shall they goe Captive with the first, viz. for their security, oppression, luxury, and inhumanity.

The words being thus cleared, the Observations follow.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1 Security, Luxury, and Inhumanity, doe bring a People into Captivity and misery.

These

These fins ruined the *Old World*, *Sodom* and *Jerusalem*, Ezek. 16. 49, 50. and 21. 3, to 13. Luk. 17. 26, 27. And if they be found reigning in *England*, they will ruine it too. If we abuse our good Land in dishonouring God, hee will cast us out of it into captivity.

2 Those that are Leaders in sin, many times are Leaders in suffering.

When such as excel others in gifts, and dignity do go before them in iniquity, 'tis just they should lead them the way into captivity. God is no respecter of persons, be they Princes or Peasants, Sovereigns or Servants that sin against him, they shall not escape; if Kings offend, they have a King above them that will not spare them, *Psal.* 62. 14. and 76. 12. and 110. 5. *Isa.* 30. 33. Hence the Apostle would have Masters to know, that if they wrong their servants, yet they have a Master in Heaven that will right them, *Ephes.* 6. 9. Great men that abuse great blessings, shall have great punishment. Many Great men think, that their greatness should privilege them in their wickedness; when 'tis an aggravation of their sin, and hastens Judgement, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11. And therefore we many times finde the poor spared, when the richer sort are plundred and slain, 2 *King.* 24. 12, 13. and 25. 20, 21, 22. *Jer.* 39. 10. when those that should bee patterns of Piety, become Patrons of impiety, prophaneness, and luxury, going before them in sin, it is just with God that they should be punished before others; as we see in *Saul*, *Ahab*, *Zedekiah*, and many Heathen Emperours, whom Justice cut off for their luxury and cruelty.

*Ingentia beneficia, ingentia vitia, ingentia supplicia.*

3. God turns the mirth of wicked men into mourning.

Their feasting into fasting, and their banquets into funeral-feasts, where there is, or at least-wise ought to be, weeping and mourning.

Many men drive away sorrow and trouble of mind, and cannot endure the thoughts of mourning; but though they fly sorrow, yet sorrow will not fly them, but will suddenly surprize them, and damp their pleasures, *Dan.* 5. 45. *Luk.* 12. 20. It will be our wisdom therefore *Actively*, and freely to afflict our selves, to weep and mourn for our sins, *James* 4. 8, 9. Else we shall be humbled *Passively*, against our wills, and God will bring some plague upon us, till he have either bend-



See Doct. Sibbs  
Beams of Lights,  
on Acts 13. 36.  
p. 175, 176. &c

ed or broken us. We should therefore fear to displease him in whose hands are all our times, *Dan. 5. 23.* Both of mirth and mourning, of rising and ruining, of plenty and poverty, of honour and dishonour, of advancement and abasement, of health and sickness, of living and dying; *All our times are in Gods hand, Psal. 31. 15.* And 'tis well for us they are so, for if they were in other hands we were undone. Wee see *Jobs* times were but a little space in the Devils hands, and how sad was it with him. He that sate to-day like a King, how suddenly is he on the Dunghil? His Carrel are taken from him, his Children slain, his Body full of boyls, and his Soul full of terrours. And thus it would be with us all, and worse, if we lay at the mercy of Sathan, who rageth more now than ever, because his time is but short, *Revel. 12. 12.* 2 It would be sad with us, if our Times were in mens hands, whose mercies are cruelties, they would deal with us as *Pharaoh* did with *Israel*, or *Herod* with *John Baptist*.

3 It would be ill with us, if our times were in our owne hands, it is ten thousand times better that they are in Gods hand. For. 1. Now they are in the hands of a *most wise God*, who knowes what is better for us than we doe for our selves. 2. They are in the hands of a *merciful God*, who turns all to good to his people, and hath promised to pitty and spare us, as a man spares his Son that serves him, *Psal. 103. 13.* all his wayes are mercy in making promises, and truth in keeping them, *Psal. 25. 10.* 3. They are in *Powerful hands*, hee is able to keep what we have committed to his trust, *Joh. 10. 28, 29.* 4. They are in *faithful and trusty hands*, friends may deceive us, *Misah 7. 5.* but he is truth it self, he cannot deceive, nor be deceived.

2 It may comfort us in afflictive times, that all our afflictions are in Gods hand, for matter, manner, time, and measure, *Revel. 3. 10.* he shall cast some of you, not all. 2 He shall cast you into *Prison*, not into the grave.

3 It is but for *ten dayes*, not ten years. God sets them their bounds, and sayes to these Metaphorical waves, as hee doth to the Natural, *Hisberio shall see come and no further.* He measures out the dayes and nights, and moneths and years, that our trials shall continue, *Joh 7. 3.* As we came into the world by Providence, so we goe out of the world by Providence,

dence, God hath set us our bounds which wee cannot pass, *Job* 7. 1. & 14. 5. neither men nor Devils can take away our lives from us till our work be done, *Job* 7. 30. wee should therefore be courageous in duty, and run hazards for God, in whose hand is our life, and not be afraid of man who must dye, *Isa* 51. 12. we have our day and to morrow to work, and till we have finishd our course none can hurt us, *Luk* 13. 32. to God the Lord belong the issues from death, *Psal* 68. 20. we should therefore submit our wills to Gods will, bee willing to live so long as he would have us live, and to dye when he shall call for us.

3 We should blefs God, who hath brought us forth, into the best times that ever the Nation saw, our Lot is fallen in pleasant seasons; they are happy times in respect of means, though we have made them unhappy for want of hearts to improve them. We should not therefore quarrel at the Providences, and various dispensations of the times, but rather admire and adore the wisdom and goodness of God in them, so did *Daniel*, ch. 2. 20, 31.

4 We should improve the time which we have from God, unto his praise. Who plants a Vineyard and doth not eat the fruit of it? Our time is Gods, and therefore great reason we should spend it to his praise, *Acts* 13. 36. It was the great commendation of the men of *Issachar*, that they understood the times, and knew what *Israel* ought to doe in them, *1 Chron* 12. 32. It is the greatest wisdom in the world, to observe the opportunities and seasons of grace, *Ephes* 5. 15, 16. Hence: our Saviour chargeth it as a great sin upon *Jezabel*, in that hee gave her space to repent, but she repented not, *Revel* 2. 20. most live as if time were at their owne dispose, they are very liberal of anothers right, promising themselves many dayes and years, when they have not assurance of one day, *Isa* 56. *nr*. *Luke* 12. 20. As we cannot adde one cubit to our stature, so we cannot adde a day to our daies. How sad then is the condition of wicked men, who daily dishonour that God in whose hand is their life? Consider, your times are in the hands of that God to whom you are profest enemies, and with whom he is angry every day, *Psal* 7. 12, 13. though he bear long, yet he will not alwayes bear, for their feet shall slide in due time, *Deut* 32. 35.

## VERSE 8.

*The Lord God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord of Hosts, I abhor the excellency of Jacob, and hate his Palaces, therefore will I deliver up the City, with all that is therein.*

**I**N this Verse we have a *Prolepsis*, or preventing of a Plea which *Israel* might make for themselves, saying, Wee are the people of God, in Covenant with him, and have received Circumcision, the seal of the Covenant, and at this day we doe enjoy many glorious priviledges, and signal favours from him, and therefore it is not like that he will destroy us, whom he hath loved so long; and made the head of the Tribes, and the glory of the world. To this the Prophet answers, Deceive not your selves with any vain confidence in your pomp, and priviledges, as if your glory and excellency could secure you from divine Justice; for I must tell you from the Lord, that since you have abused his blessings, hee abhors your Excellency, hates your Palaces, and will destroy your Cities wherein you trust, *vers. 1.* and the better to assure you of the truth of all this, he hath sworn it, *The Lord hath sworn, that he abhors the excellency of Jacob.*

In this Verse we have, **1.** A Commination, *I will deliver up the City, with all that is therein*; **q. d.** you glory in your two fortified Cities, viz. *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, you trust in the riches, strength, and fulness of them, but though they be never so full of men, money, and all manner of store; yet for your sins I will deliver them, and all their riches, with all the inhabitants into the hands of the *Assyrians*, and *Chaldeans* for a prey. Though in their owne conceit they seem invincible, by reason of the multitude of men and ammunition, yet I will empty them, and will send an enemy to besiege them, into whose hands I will deliver them.

*Que implent  
eam, i. c. plenitudinem ejus.  
Heb.*

*Sagar, c'ausit,  
occlusit, conclusit,  
coercuit, ut nullum esset  
efugium  
Guit, civitates, i. e.  
civitates. Eni  
numeri, & Met.  
Sub.*

By City here is meant, the Citizens and their substance, all should become a prey to the mercilefs enemy, both in *Samaria* and *Jerusalem*, for by a Synecdoche both are here threatned; both had sinned, and therefore now both shall suffer; *Samaria* shall be sackt by the *Assyrians*, and *Jerusalem* by the *Chaldeans*. It is true, that in this Chapter, and in the whole

whole Prophecy, the Prophet ſpeaks primarily, and principally to the ten Tribes; but ſecondarily, and concomitantly to *Jeruſalem*, and the other two Tribes, as I have ſhewed, verſ. 1.

1 Here is the ground of this deſtruction, and that is, Gods deteſtation of them for their ſins, *I abhor the excellency of Jacob*, and therefore I will deliver their Cities into the hands of their enemies. Some render the words thus, *I abhor the Pride of Jacob*, that is true, for as the Lord abhors Pride in all, ſo eſpecially in his *Iſrael*, a people near unto him. The word ſignifies both Pride and Excellency, but becauſe this people conſided in their Priviledges, and boated of their Dignity, therefore the word is moſt properly rendred excellency. The word is ſometimes taken in evil part, for pride, and arrogance, *Exod. 15. 7.* and ſometimes in good part, for magnificence and excellency, ſo here; for the Prophet in this Verſe doth not enveigh againſt their pride, (he had done that before) but he labours to remove their carnal confidence which they placed, 1. In the Temple, which is called in Scripture by the name of Excellency and Glory, becauſe it was that where- in they gloried, *Pſal. 47. 4. Ezek. 24. 21.*

*Gaon, excellen-  
tia, gloria, ſu-  
perbia Jacobi.  
i. e. Iſraelita-  
rum. Met. effr.*

*Glorioſum Dei  
Templum hic  
gloria Jacobi  
nominatur. Ri-  
ver.*

2 In their Riches, Dignities, Priviledges, and Prerogatives, wherewith that Nation was adorned above all the people of the world, *Rom. 3. 1, 2. & 9. 4, 5.* they thought that the bare having of theſe would ſhelter them from puniſhment, but the Lord tells them, that he abhorred both them and their priviledges, and ſince they had abuſed them, and ſo forfeited them all, they were now ſo much the more hateful and abominable to God; q. d. *You look upon your ſelves as the only high and holy ones of the World, but I tell you: (ſaith God) ſince you abuſe my bleſſings to my diſhonour, I look upon you as a pack of prophane, ungodly men, and will deal with you accordingly; and therefore tell me of your Temple, Sacrifices, dignity, and riches, for I tell you to your faces, that I deteſt both you and your excellencies, and abhor your ſtately Palaces, which you have built by oppreſſion and cruelty; and have abuſed to my diſhonour.*

*Armenoth, i. e.  
Palatia, & ar-  
ces baſilicas.  
Taab, deſidera-*

*vit, & per Antiphrasim abominatus ſuit; in Caleſt deſiderare, in Piel contrarium ſignificat, ut averſari, abhorrere; ſic pleriq; verba Hebraea in diverſis conjugationibus contrariis habens ſignificationes. Abreer.*

3 Here is the confirmation of this Commination, *The Lord hath sworn it*, even the Lord of Hosts, who is Omnipotent, and hath all power in his hand to execute his purposes. The Lord doth not only say it, but swear it; the *Jews* were hard of belief, and slighted the threatnings of the Prophets, therefore the Lord confirms it with an Oath, saying, *I have sworn by myself*, or as the words are in the fountain, *I have sworn* (*Benaphsho, in anima sua*) by my Soul, or Life, the Lord swears by himself, because there is none greater than he. The soul is the man, and he that swears by his soul swears by himself, and therefore the soul (according to the Hebrew Idiom) is oft put for a mans self, as *Psal.* 3. 2. *Jer.* 51. 6. *Math.* 25. 26. It is an Anthropopathy frequent in Scripture, *Gen.* 22. 16. *Jer.* 51. 14. it is spoken of God after the manner of men, as an Hand, an Eye, a Face, a Foot, is oft ascribed to God; so here and elsewhere, a Soul is ascribed to God, *Isa.* 1. 14. *Jer.* 5. 9. 29. which is God himself, for whatsoever is in God, is God.

*Per animam vi-*  
*ta Dei intelli-*  
*tur, i. e. ipsamet*  
*Dei essentia, seu*  
*ipse Deus. Po-*  
*lanus Syntag.*  
*l. 2. c. 35.*

Q. d. *If we beleeve men who swear by their soul, or life, (which yet is as nothing) how weighty ought my Oathes to bee with you (saith the Lord) when I put myself to pledge; and if ye will not beleeve my Prophets, yet beleeve me, whose Decrees are immutable, whose Judgements are intolerable, who cannot deceive, nor be deceived; who am Omnipotent, and able to put all my Threatnings in execution against you, since I am the Lord of Hosts, whom all Creatures doe obey as their supreme Commander.*

*Juravit i. e. im-*  
*mutabiliter de-*  
*crevit.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

## 1 Swearing in it self is lawfull.

God himself who cannot sin, yet swears by himself, *Isa.* 45. 23. & 62. 8. *Heb.* 6. 13. The Lord to strengthen our faith in the truth of his Promises, sometimes swears, *Gen.* 22. 16. *Psal.* 132. 11. *Heb.* 6. 17. and sometimes he confirms the truth of his Threatnings with an Oath, to make us fear, *Psal.* 95. 11. *Heb.* 3. 11. thrice happy they for whose sake the Lord swears, and most unhappy they that beleeve him not when he swears; since he that beleeves not God makes him a Lyar, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. not by any transmutation of God, but

See my Com.  
o 1 Tim. 4. 1.  
P 305.

but because hee esteemes his Word and Promises as a false thing.

*2 Wicked men are hardly brought to beleve the Threatnings of God.*

The Lord must swear here to awaken them out of their stupidity, so sottish are men by nature, especially when hardned in a way of sin; and if Gods owne people in whom there is a Principle of Grace, be slow of heart to beleve the Doctrin of the Gospel, *Luke 24. 25, 26.* how hard is it to work those truths upon those who have neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, *1 Cor. 2. 9.*

See Dr. Balton in his Sermon in folio on Joh. 1. 50. p. 190.

*3 God is the Lord of Hosts.*

He hath all Power in his hands, and all Creatures at his command, ready to execute his wrath upon wicked men. This Title is given to God above two hundred times in the Old Testament, and but once in the New, *1 Tim. 3. 4.* the reason is, because this is a name of Majesty and Terror, suitable to Old Testament times; but in the New Testament he hath more sweet and mild Titles, as Father of Mercies, God of all consolation, the Saviour of all men, &c. We should therefore fear to displease him, who hath the higher Host of Heaven, Myriads of Angels, and the lower Host of Creatures on earth, all ready at the least beck of their Lord and Master to destroy his enemies.

See more in my Comment. on Amos 4. 13.

V. Mendoza in 1 Reg. 1. 3. Annot. 5. p. 134.

*4 No Priviledges can preserve a sinful people from ruine.*

Let them be exalted to Heaven in excellency and glory, and be loaded with riches, nobility, digniry, and preheminance, yet if they abuse those Priviledges they shall be thrown down to Hell, *Matth. 11. 23.* God is no respecter of Persons, but in every Nation such as work righteousness are accepted of him, and such as work unrighteousness, be they *Jewes or Gentiles*, are rejected of him. When God shall chuse a people to be an holy people to himself, and they shall walk unholily, and live like the prophane of the world, it is just with God that they should perish with them. Many boast that they are Christians, they are Baptized, they hear the Word, and receive the Sacrament, Aye, but do you walk up to those Priviledges, and answer them with obedience; if not, you are but baptized Heathens; yea a drunken *Turk* is nearer Heaven than a drunken and dissolute Christian. Meer Titular

See more in my Com. on Hof. 13. 15. Obf. 4. p. 50.



Christians, are no Christians. As he is not a Jew that is one outwardly, so he is not a Christian that is one only nominally; we must be internal ones in spirit and in truth, answering our Gospel-Priviledges with Gospel-Practises, and then we shall be happy; *Rom. 2. 25, 28, 29.*

5 *Sin makes God to hate our very dwellings and Palaces.*

He loathes the habitations of wicked men, and looks upon them as so many Swine-styes, and sinks of sin. The habitations of the wicked are cursed of God; *Job 12. 6. & 15. 34. Zach. 5. 4.* As we should keep our bodies pure, as becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghost, so wee should keep our Houses pure from sin, and put away iniquity farre from our Tabernacles, that they may be *Bethels*, houses of God, and not *Beth-avens*, houses of vanity and iniquity, *Job 11. 14. & 22. 23.* this is the way to keep our houses in peace, *Job 5. 24. Prov. 1. ult. & 8. 6.* and to make our Families flourish, *Prov. 14. 11.*

We should rather desire with those holy Patriarchs, *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, to live in Tents, and mean houses, where we may serve God ( remembering that we are but Strangers and Pilgrims here, but Citizens of Heaven ) than to live ( as these Epicures in the Text ) in stately Palaces, abounding with sensual luxury, and all manner of riot, till they be destroyed.

6 *When men will not beleeeve the Threatnings, they shall feel the punishment.*

The righteous doe hear and fear, but the wicked never fear, till they feel the Sword and Pestilence upon them. When no warnings can mend a People, then Judgements end them; as we see in the old World, *Jerusalem*, and others; *Lots* Sons in Law would not beleeeve till they were burnt, *Gen. 19. 14.* nor *Pharaoh* till he was drowned.

7 *It is Sin that ruines Cities.*

*Israel* sinned, and now City and all is taken. It is this, that hath brought fire and sword, desolation and destruction upon the most glorious Cities. Many complaine of Instruments that have betrayed them, but it is our sins that have betrayed us into their hands; and therefore Magistrates, Ministers, and Governours should improve their interest for the stopping of sin, that so they may prevent the ruine of those places where they dwell.

VER.

See my Com.  
on *Hos. 13. 16.*  
*Obf. 6.* and *M.*  
*Crag* his 8th.  
*Ser. p. 132.*

## VERSE 9.

*And it shall come to pass, if there remaine ten men in one house, that they shall dye.*

**W**EE have heard of *Israels* Captivity before, but since that could doe no good, now comes the Pestilence, and that no ordinary one, which usually leaves some untouched; But such a terrible, destructive Pestilence, that should sweep away all before it; insomuch that if ten men remaine alive, they shall all dye, and they shall be buried not in an ordinary way, but they shall be burnt; and that by the nearest relations, which was used by the people of *Israel*, only in cases of extreame necessity, 1 Sam. 31. 12;

In this Verse we have, 1 A Judgement threatened, viz. death, *Ye shall dye*, i. e. by the Pestilence. Those that escaped the Sword, and were not killed, or carried away by the enemy, the Pestilence, or some other Judgement shall slay them, as appears by the next verse.

2 Here is the fierceness of this Pestilence, it shall sweep all before it, this is more than the Pestilence usually doth; God had corrected them before with lighter rods, yet he left some alive; but now if ten men remaine in some very numerous Family, they shall all dye together. This sets forth the dreadfulnes of Gods wrath against this people, for when the Plague rageth very fiercely, yet it usually spares some, if there bee four or five in an house, usually one is spared, or if eight in a Family, it may be two are spared; but when there are ten in a Family, and they must all dye, this is dreadful indeed. By *Ten* the Prophet signifies many, because ten is the utmost of single number; It is a certain and distinct number put for an uncertain, the like we find, *Numb.* 14. 22. *Levit.* 26. 26. 1 Sam. 1. 8. *Job* 19. 3. *Psal.* 91. 7. *Eccles.* 7. 19. *Isa.* 5. 10. *Zach.* 8. 23. *Mat.* 25. 1.

See Caryl on  
*Job* 19. 3.

3 Here is the certainty of this dreadful destruction, *It shall come to pass*; that is, it shall certainly come to pass, for God hath so decreed it, and there is no resisting.

*Hajah, erit, fiet.*  
*Eh'eh,* the  
name of God,  
which denotes  
his immutabi-  
lity, comes from  
hence.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Judgements seldom goe alone.*

See more on *A-*  
*mos* 4. 8. *Obi.* 2.

When God begins to correct a people he takes them up for all together, and spends one rod upon them after another, till he hath either mended or ended them. God wants not variety of wayes to cut off rebellious sinners, If they escape one Judgement, yet he hath another to arrest them, *Amos* 5. 19. & 9. 1, 2, 3. *Mat.* 24. 7. he hath moths, thieves, rust, and cankers to rob us of our comforts, *Jam.* 5. 3, 3.

2 *Desperate Diseases must have desperate Cures.*

See my Com.  
on *Hof.* 13. 16.  
p. 68.

When gentler corrections will not work on a people, then come direful plagues and end them. Those sinners were become desperate and incurable, and now the Lord sets upon them with direful judgements and consumes them: that so all the Nations round about might hear and fear, and doe no more so wickedly.

3 *Incorrigible sinners are cut off by the Pestilence.*

God had used all means to reclaime this People, but all in vaine, therefore now they must dye for it. So true is that of the Apostle, The wages of sin is death, *Rom.* 1. 31. & 6. 23. Sin and Death came into the world together, *Gen.* 2. 17. *Dan.* 9. 11. *Rom.* 5. 12. How blind then are the *Socinians*, that can finde no place in Scripture where it is said, that death is the punishment of sin.

4 *What God hath decreed shall certainly be effected.*

Though we cannot bring it to pass, yet he can and will, whether it be for the overthrow of the wicked, as here; or for the comfort of the godly. The counsel of the Lord shall stand, and the thoughts of his heart unto all generations. Men may plot, and contrive wayes to overthrow the Doctrine and Discipline of Christ, but these devices and counsels of men shall not stand, it is the counsels of the Lord only that shall abide, *Psal.* 33. 10, 11.

## VER. 10.

And a mans Uncle shall take him up, and he that burneth him, to bring out the bones out of the house, and shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house, Is there yet any with thee? and he shall say, No; then shall he say, Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord.

**V** Hat the Prophet had exprest somewhat obscurely in the precedent Verse, he sets down more fully and clearly in this, viz. That the Pestilence should be so dreadful, that it should destroy whole Families, insomuch that there should not be living men enough to bury the dead. There should neither be Father nor Mother, Brother nor Sister, Son nor Daughter left alive to doe the last office of Burial for them; but a mans Uncle, or Kinsman must doe it for him, else hee may lye and rot above ground.

*Dod, amator, amicus, propinquus, Patronus, significat generationem quemvis amicum dilectum, & per Synec. Spe. Patrum.*

This shews what great desolation the Pestilence had made amongst them, that the Uncle, or nearest Kinsman (to whom the right of succession to the Inheritance belongs) must bee constrained to burn the Body, that so he might carry the bones out of the house with more ease. This was servile work, and belonged to mercenary men appointed for that purpose, Ezek. 39. 14. but for want of such ordinary Officers to doe it, the Kinsman must doe it.

So that in this Verse we have, 1. An Amplification of that great desolation which the Pestilence should make amongst them, it should be so terrible that it should destroy whole Families, and cut off those ordinary Officers which were appointed to bury the dead, insomuch that the next Kinsman must be forced to doe it; neither shall he doe it in an ordinary way, but he must burne his bones. Calvin and others make the Uncle alone to be both the burner of the dead, and the burier of his bones; they read the words thus, *His Uncle shall take him up and burne him, that he may carry the bones out of the house.* This reading seems to be most genuine and agreeable to the Text and context, setting forth the dreadful hand of

*Vinculatio, & comburens eum, i. e. & comburens eum ad solendum ossa e domo. Calvin.*

God upon them, in that the Pestilence should be so fierce, that they should want ordinary Officers to bury the dead.

Q. But how are they said to burne their dead, when it appears both by the Old and New Testament that the Jewes did bury their dead? Gen. 23. 4. & 49. 31. & 50. 5, 15, 26. Mar. 8. 21, 22. Joh. 19. 41, 42.

A. It is true, usually they did bury their dead in times of Peace, but in times of Warre they sometimes did burne their dead, as they did *Saul*, and his Sons, to prevent further abuse which might be offered to their bodies by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 31. 12, 13. so in times of great contagion to prevent stench, and further infection, they burnt their dead, as in the text; They might also burne them to cleanse the house (which was fallen to the Kinsman) from legal uncleanness by the dead, *Numb. 19. 14*. Hence we read of their *Vespillones*, and *Pol-limtores*, their buriers and their burners of the dead, and so had the *Gentiles*, and the *Romans*, they burnt their dead to ashes, and put their ashes into Urns (as appears by *Virgil*, *Ovid*, and others) and Pitchers of Gold, Silver, Brass, or Marble, with great care and ceremoniousness. These *Jewes* being themselves Idolaters, did symbolize too much with Heathens and Idolaters in this thing.

*Vespillo cura-  
bat cadavera,  
& more gentis  
comburebat.  
" Ossaq, lecta  
cids, text Cori-  
neus aheno, Vir.  
Aeid. 6.  
V. Godwins  
Roman Antiq.  
1. 2. cap. 21. S.  
3. p. 76. and  
Jewish Antiq.  
1. 6. c. 5.*

2 Here is the reason why they burne the dead, and that is, that they might the easier carry the bones out of the house, when the flesh was burnt off before.

3 Here is a Conference between the Kinsman and him that lies in the house, and he shall say unto him that is by the sides of the house; that is, to him that is within the house, as *Jonah* was said to descend into the sides of the Ship, *Jonah 1. 5*. so these for fear did run into some corner of the house, to hide themselves from the infection.

The Question which he asks is this, *Is there any yet with thee?* viz. left alive in the family, or dead, that I may burne them, and bury their bones.

2 Here is the Parties answer in the Negative, No, there is an end of all, there is not one left, they are all dead and gone, according to that, verse nine, *If ten men be in one house, consumption; ab they shall all dye.*

*Apas, desit, de-  
fecit.*

The Prophet enlargeth himself in this discourse, about Gods Judgements, the better to awaken these sortish, sensual, secure sinners.

3 Here

3 Here is the inference upon this answer; then shall he say, *Hold thy tongue*, be silent, be patient, doe not fret, nor fume, doe not mutter nor murmur against God, as if he had wronged you, because he kills you; but acquiesce in his just Judgements, and silently submit unto his will, for it is his work, *Amos 5. 13.* As for us, our sins are so great, and grievous, that we dare not once call on the Name of the Lord, for a release, or mitigation of his Judgements.

4 Here is the reason why they must keep silence, viz. Because the Lord was just in all that hee did unto them, and therefore they might not once make mention of the Name of the Lord by way of complaint, thus some. Interpreters swear, and are much perplext with the various Versions of this Text, inasmuch that there are almost as many Interpretations of it as there be Interpreters.

1 Say some, It seems to point at these two, who agree to be silent in what they had done, lest they should bee sequestred as uncleane by the Law, being legally polluted by touching the dead, *Numb. 19. 14.* See more to this Point, in *Hutchinson* on the place.

2 Others give this gloss, *Hold thy tongue, for we may not make mention of the name of the Lord, q. d.* Be silent, lament not for them: for they are not worthy lamentation, they are so wicked, that they will not once remember God: nor cry to him, though he bind them with the cords of affliction. *Tace, quia non erant commemoraturi nomen Jehova. Piscat.*

3 Others make it the voyce of desperate persons (according to the Margin of our Bibles) *We have not, or we will not make mention of the name of the Lord, q. d.* it is bootless to pray, for God is set to plague us, and will not be pacified; let us therefore eat and drink, since to morrow we must dye. Neither tell us of Gods names, for he is our enemy, and we cannot endure to hear of him, for neither he nor his Ministers doe ever Prophesie good unto us. If we should call upon him we may mind him of us, and so bring new plagues upon our selves. This agrees best with verse eleven, which follows immediately. *Desperatam illorum malitiam notat, qui nec intermedias calamitates Dei manum agnunt, & illius opem imploraturi sint. Gualter in locum.*

4 Others thus; These Hypocritical ones, that formerly gloried that they were Gods people, his peculiar, his inheritance, his holy ones, &c. Gods wrath shall lye so heavy upon them, that they shall boast no more of this, for they shall bee dumbe when they hear Gods name, and abhor it as desperate



rate reprobrates use to doe. He will not suffer them any longer to take his name in vaine, his wrath shall burne so fiercely against them, that they shall not dare once to make mention of his name, or to come neer him who is a consuming fire.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 Decent burial is a mercy. *Judg. 9.*

It is reckoned as a Judgement here, that these wicked men should want the honour and solemnity of ordinary burial. It is a mercy to have a Grave, and therefore when the Kings of *Judah* are recorded, their burials are also mentioned; and those of highest merit were buried in the upper part of the Sepulchers of the Sons of *David*, *1 Chron. 32. 33.* *Asa* a good King was honourably buried, with great solemnity, *1 Chron. 16. 14.* and so was King *Zedekiah*, *Jer. 14. 5.* But so was not wicked *Jeberam*, *2 Chron. 21. 19.* and it was a curse upon *Jebojakim*, that he should be buried with the burial of an Ass, and be contemptibly cast into a ditch, *Jer. 22. 18, 19.* It is reckoned as a Judgement, when men have no burial, *Psal. 79. 3.* *Deut. 28. 26.* *1 King. 21. 23, 24.* *Jer. 14. 16.* & *16. 4.* and therefore *David* commends the burial of *Saul*, he blesteth and rewardeth the men of *Jabesh* for it, *2 Sam. 3. 5.*

The Body is a peice of Gods Workmanship, curiously wrought, *Job 10. 8.* & *33. 4.* *Psal. 139. 5.* and therefore must not be carelessly thrown away, it was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, and is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, *1 Cor. 3. 16, 17.* & *6. 15, 19.* and shall be raised up at the last day, and bee made like to Christs glorious Body, *Job 19. 25.* *Phil. 3. 21.*

It is one of the last offices that we can doe for our Relations, we should therefore decently commit their bodies to the grave, as to a bed of rest, *Isa. 57. 2.* there to remaine till the general Resurrection of us all. So they did by *Steven*, *Act. 8. 2.* and the Patriarchs, *Acts 7. 15, 16.*

Caution. Yet we must beware, 1 Of the fopperies of the *Papists*, who keep the bones of Saints (supposed Saints most of them) unburied, that they may worship them, kiss them, and offer to them. 1 Bones are a part of mens bodies, and ought

ought to be buried decently, as well as the body; *Exod. 13. 19.*  
*Joh. 14. 32.* it is reckoned as a punishment to have the bones  
 lying unburied; *1ſa. 14. 19.* *Jer. 8. 19.*

There is no Precept nor Preſident in all the Word of  
 God, that commands ſuch Worſhip; yea the Lord himſelf  
 hid the body of *Moses*, that it might not be Idolized, *Jud. 9.*

Those Relicks have proved to be the bones of *Aſſes*, *Stags*,  
*Theeves*, and *Murderers*.

It is injurious to *Chriſt* and derogates from his Merits; yea  
 it is injurious to the *Saints*, who are kept from their graves, where  
 they reſt in peace till the Day of the Lord. Beſides you may ſee  
 the folly of Superſtition, when they ſhould be imitating the  
 Graces of the *Saints*, they are gathering their bones and bree-  
 ches, their caps and girdles; their hairs and habits. At *Rome*, who  
 liſts may ſee *St. Martins Boots*, *St. George his Sword*, *S. Cris-  
 pins Cutting-knife*, *Joſephs Breeches*, *Maries Smock*, *Tho-  
 mas his Shooe*, the Milk of *Mary*, the Swadling-clouts of  
*Chriſt*, and the *Aſſes Head* that he rode on. So that *Rome* is a  
 Church where Relicks and Images are worſhipped; God Al-  
 mighty pictured, Vowes violated, Prophaneneſs countenan-  
 ced, half Communion adminiſtered, Humane Traditions e-  
 qualized with Scripture, and Ceremonies multiplied.

*Cam.* Yet our greateſt care ſhould be for our Souls, what  
 will it avail us to have the body perfumed, ſpiced, and em-  
 balmed, when the Soul which is the nobleſt part ſhall rot and  
 periſh? Look to your Souls; and then God will provide for  
 your bodies; when the Mid-wives feared the Lord, he made  
 them houſes.

*Cam.* Yet we ſhould not be diſmayed, when the bodies  
 of God's *Saints* be given to the Beaſts of the Field, and the  
 Fowls of Heaven, *Pſal. 79. 2. 3.* faith fears not ſuch things.  
 He that numbers the hairs of our heads, will not loſe our bones;  
 he that is ſo careful of our excrementitious parts, will not ſuf-  
 fer our eſſential and integral parts to periſh. Solemn burial  
 addes to the comfort of the living; but not of the dead. *Luce-  
 rus* had no Funeral ſolemnities, nor Marble Monument, yet  
 was he carried into *Abrahams* boſome:

*Facilis jactura Sepulchri,  
 Caro tegitur qui non habet Urnam.*

2 Obl. Gods people must be patiently silent in calamitous times. *Psal. 39. 9*

They must not be stupidly silent, for Grace doth not raise, but raise, and requite the affections. We may spread our distress before God, and in an humble manner expostulate with him; as *Job, Jeremy*, and other Saints have done. It is an holy silence, and not a sinful silence, which is here enjoined us. When Gods hand lyes heave upon us, not only our Tongues must be silent, *Lev. 10. 2, 3. 1 Sam. 3. 18. Isa. 36. 6, 7, 8. Amos 5. 13. Zeph. 1. 7.* but our Souls must keep silence to Jehovah, *Psal. 62. 1. My soul waiteth upon God*, so we read it, but others according to the Original, thus, My soul is silent, quiet, submits, and subject to God, my affections are subdued to him. Many mens Tongues are silent, but their hearts are full of rage and fury; yea many mens words are smooth as oyl, when their hearts are like drawn swords. But a gracious soul in all humility adores the just Judgements of God upon himself, and others, without any murmuring or contradiction. He doth not impatiently fly in Gods face, nor charge God foolishly, *Job 1. ult.* but he peaceably resigns himself, and all he hath unto Gods dispose; God is the Potter, and he is the Clay, ready to be formed and framed, raised or ruined, made or marred, as he shall please. Hee gives the Lord a blank as it were, and bids him write what please himself, and it shall please him: Murmuring doth but double our Protest, it is a slander of God, and a charging of him with folly, which he will not bear on our hands; and therefore when ever *Israel* fell to murmuring, a Judgement presently followed; other sins be can bear withall, but not with this. Unrained Reifers may gall their necks, but they cannot break the yoke; Wild Bells in a Net, by tossing and tumbling do but intangle themselves the more, *Isa. 11. 20.* it is Prayer and Patience that will mend all; sit not then at Gods dispensations, neither quarrel with his Providences; but judge your selves, and justifie him, so shall you have peace. *Lev. 26. 46. 47, 48. Judg. 10. 15. 2 Chron. 12. 6. Ezra 9. 13. Neh. 9. 33. Psal. 51. 4. & 119. 137. Dan. 9. 7. 1 Cor. 11. 31.* Let us not like Sons of *Adam* justifie our selves, and lay the fault upon God, but let us kiss the hand that smites us, and say, *Righteous art thou Lord, and just are thy judgements.*

*Anima mea dum  
mijah, silens, a-  
cila, quiesca est.*

See Mr. Burgess  
on Self-judge-  
ing, on 1 Cor.  
11. 31.

3 *Obj. Hypocritical shows and shadows of Religion will stand a man in no stead in a day of wrath.*

These sensual Idolaters cried, The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord; they boasted that God was their Father, and they his people, that they knew him, and were known of him above all the people of the earth, *Hos. 8. 3.* But now the day of wrath is come, they dare not once make mention of the name of God, they are so oppress'd with the guilt of their sins. It is not crying Lord, Lord, but doing Gods will sincerely, that will yield us comfort in calamitous times, *Math. 7. 21, 23. & Cor. 1. 12.* A dead Beast can doe us no service, and dead Graces will stand us in no stead. Let us not then cheat our selves with shewes instead of substance, and with counters instead of gold; let us not be almost, but altogether Christians, not having a name only to live, but let us live indeed; that we may be *Nathaniels*, Israelites indeed, in whom there is no reigning guile, *Job. 1. 47.*

4 *Wicked men in calamitous times are full of despondency and despair.*

Though in times of Peace they may boast how God loves them, yet when God awakens their Consciences by his Judgements, the very name of God is terrible to them, and they could wish he were not: Then either they hide themselves with *Adam*, or run from him as *Cain*, *Gen. 4. 13.* or hang themselves with *Judas*, or cry with those wicked ones, *Job 21. 14. Depart from us.* Or, they blaspheme because of their pain, and like Serpents fly in the face of him that toucheth them, *Rev. 16. ult.* and like Heathens, who in their calamities curse their gods, and beat them, as the Authors of all their misery; and at last they shall cry to the Rocks and Mountains to fall upon them and hide them, *Luke 23. 30. Rev. 6. 16.*

These cry, *There is no hope*, *Jer. 18. 12.* and therefore they banish the thoughts of God out of their hearts, *Psal. 10. 4.* and will not once make mention of him in their troubles. These are beaten, but not bettered; corrected, but not amended; and in some respect worse than Heathens, of whom *Seneca* observes, *That they were most busie in worshipping their gods, when they were most displeased.* But we have those that fly from God when he draws nigh to them, thoughts of God are never more pleasing

See Mr. Burgess's his Spi. Retinings, 1 Part, P. 469. Lect. 78  
*Diligentius Dei irati coluntur.*  
*Sen.*

to a gracious soul, nor never more displeasing to wicked men than when they are in trouble.

VERSE II.

*For behold the Lord commandeth, and he will smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts.*

**I**N this Verse we have an Amplification, and Confirmation of the precedent commination, *vers. 8.* The Prophet tells them, that the destruction shall be general, high and low, rich and poor, great and small, none should escape, but as all had sinned, so all should suffer; a forreign enemy like a violent flood should over-run the Land, so that there should be no escaping.

These Sinners were secure, and carnally-confident, trusting in their two victorious and successful Kings, *Jeroboam* the second King of *Israel*, and *Uzziah* King of *Judah*; they sleighted the words of the Prophet, and therefore the Lord resolves to preach to them in another manner *viz.* by the Sword of the *Assyrian*, and *Chaldean*, who should make them feel, what they would not believe.

In the words we have,

1 The causal Particle, *For*, which hath relation to the eighth and ninth Verses, where the Lord threatneth to destroy the City with its fulness, and to add the Pestilence to the Sword, and gives you the reason of it in this verse, *Mandavit Dominus*, the Lord hath commanded and decreed it, and none shall be able to reverse it.

*Mandavit, ordi-*  
*navit, decrevit,*  
*& sicut decre-*  
*vit, sic & exe-*  
*quetur.*

2 Here is an *ecce, behold*, to incite both our Attention and Intention, it calls for our ears and eyes.

3 Here is the matter to be marked, and that is the command and charge of God to destroy his people for their provocations, *The Lord commandeth, and he will smite the City, &c.* you have not to doe with an impotent man, but with an Omnipotent God, who as he hath made all things, so he hath them all at his beck, to help or hurt us as pleaseth him. Hee needs not Armies, he needs not Instruments to confound his

adver-

adversaries, it is but speaking and it is done, *Psal.* 44. 4. & 148. 5.

Q. How doth the Lord smite the City, when he only commands that it should be done?

A. It is a Rule, *Quod quis per alium facit, per se facere videtur.* In that the Lord commands the *Assyrians* and *Chaldeans* to destroy, *vers.* 14. he is said to do it himself, because they were but his rods, and the instruments in his hand to chastise his people; whoever be the *Assyrians*, yet God is the Author.

4 Here is the Universality of this destruction, he will bring down great and small, he will cause the *Assyrians* and *Babylonians* to smite the great house with breaches, and the little house with clefts. The word which we render Breaches, signifies also droppings, which by little and little rot the house, and so make breaches and ruptures in it; but in this place it properly signifies ruptures, and breaches.

*Regim, rupturis, contractionibus, vel distillationibus, cane.*

They were all incorrigible, and incurable, both great and small, and therefore now they shall be punished, and perish together, both houses and inhabitants. Their Palaces and great Houses in *Sion*, and *Samaritan*, should have a great down-fall; and the lesser houses should chop, and chink, and moulder away. By these expressions the Prophet intimates, that both noble and ignoble should perish together; as they had overthrown the Law, and all equity, *vers.* 12. so now God overthrows them.

*5. 2. Hic verò idem valet quod Regim, i. e.*

Some conceive, that the Prophet here alludes to some Earth-quake, which should make breaches and clefts in their houses, but the Prophet confutes these, and tells us, that it shall be done by the hand of an enemy, *vers.* 14. Others Allegorize, and apply this to the two Kingdoms of *Israel* and *Judah*, which are called two houses, *Isa.* 8. 14. By the great house (say they) is meant the Ten Tribes, which did excell in wealth and dignity. By the lesser house is meant the Kingdom of *Judah*, which was little, compared with *Israel*; the Kingdom of *Israel* should be so ruined by the *Assyrians*, that it should never be repaired; but the Kingdom of *Judah* should only have some clefts and chavns made by the *Babylonians*, which were in part made up again, after the seventy years Captivity in *Babylon*, by *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*.

*Percutiet regnum per cessione sortis, regnum vero minus placavit.*



## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Matters of moment must especially be marked.* Great Judgements were coming upon this People, and the Lord by an *Ecce, Behold*, labours to awaken them to the consideration of them. The birth of Christ is a matter of great moment, and therefore the Angels come with a *Behold*, Luk. 2. 10. the seasons of grace are matters of great moment, and therefore a double *Behold* is set upon them, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Our Original Sin is a matter deeply to be thought on, and therefore it hath an *Ecce* set upon it, Psa. 51. 5. and so on the Day of Judgement, Jude 7. Revel. 32. 7.

See more in  
Robinson on  
Ephes. 6. 13.  
Lect. 1. p. 3.

2 *Warre and Pestilence are Gods Servants, which come and goe at his beck and commandment.*

As all Creatures are his Servants, Winds, and Seas, and Sun obey him, Job 9. 7. so all Armies are his, he is Lord of Hosts, and if he but stamp or hiss for an Enemy, or call for a Pestilence on the Land, they readily obey, Isa. 7. 18, 19. Levitic. 26. 25. Jer. 47. 6, 7. he can destroy the most potent enemy by the most impotent and contemptible means, as Frogs, Flies, Lice, Psa. 105. 31.

If he say to such and such Diseases, Go, seize on such a man, or such a woman, they go; if he bid them cease, they cease. We should not therefore bribe the Sergeant, but compound with the Creditor. Run not in your sickness and distress to Physick or Friends, but make peace with God in the first place, and then all shall be at peace with you.

We should also be *patient* under all Dispensations, looking at Gods hand in all, seeing him ordering and disposing all for the good of his. This will make you dumbe and silent, when you see it is the Lord that doth it, 1 Sam. 16. 10. Psa. 39. 9. Job. 18. 11.

See my Com.  
on Hos. 13. 16.  
p. 109.

3 *Obs. Universality in sin brings universality in suffering.* The generality of this people were corrupt, and now they are generally ruined. As rich and poor were Idolaters, Apostates, and Prophane; so now they should be ransackt and ruined together.

4 *Obs. Sin brings a curse on our dwellings, and layes famous fabricks in the dust,* as I have shewed before on verse eight.

VER.

## V. 13.

*Shall Horses run upon the Rock? Will one plow there with Oxen? for ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock.*

**I**N the precedent Verse the Lord threatened a general Judgement against these general Sinners, but they trusting to their owne strength and glory, feared no Judgements, but conceited that the Lord who had taken them into Covenant with himself, and adopted them for his owne peculiar people, and adorned them with many Priviledges above the rest of the Nations round about them, would not deal so sharply with them as the Prophet threatened; but would take some gentler course, plowing them still by his Prophets, and labouring to reclaim them by their Ministry.

To this the Lord answers in this Verse, by a Prolepsis, he prevents this evasion and vain conceit, telling them, that it was to no purpose to take any more pains with them, or to correct them with gentler rods, for they remained still obstinate and perverse, falling away more and more, growing worse and worse; so that he did but plow the rocks, and so break his Plows without any increase; and sow the sands, losing his labour on them; and therefore he is now resolved that his Spirit should no longer contend with such rocky, rebellious Sinners, nor his patience wait any more upon them. The Interrogation is a strong Negation. *Shall Horses run upon the rock, or Oxen plow there?* No, they will not, they are no fit places for such purposes; and doe you think that I will alwaies sing to deaf men, and bestow my cost and care upon such rocky and hardened Sinners, that will bring forth no fruit?

It is a Proverbial speech, and signifies lost labour, and therefore we use to say of such as labour in vaine, They goe about to plow the rocks, and sow the sands.

*Sicut frustra laboraret, si quis vellet incitare equos ad cultum horum ad faci-*

*in Petra, aut si quis debus cum vellet arare; sic ego frustra laboro, dum voco vobum rella, qui gland perverti essis. Piscator.*

Interpreters vary much in their Exposition of this first branch of the verse. See five various senses in a *Lapide*, and  
6x

fix in our large Annotations; that which I have given (with submission to better judgements) I conceive to be most genuine, and best agreeing with the context; which is the surest and soundest way of expounding Scripture, and is of more weight than an hundred *sic dixit* of this and that man.

So that in this Verse we have, 1 The Lord's resolution to plow these rocks no longer.

2 Here is the Reason and ground of this Resolution, viz. for their Injustice, Oppression, Tyranny, and all kind of cruelty towards the poor. There was no righteousness to be found amongst them; they had turned Judgement into Gall, or Poyson, (as the word also signifies) because poyson is the bitterest part of poysonous beasts; to wit, the gall. The word also signifies the Head, and is put for Poyson, because the Poyson of Dragons lies in their head, *Dem. 32. 33.*

*Rosh, significat  
toxicum & tale  
venenum quod  
serpentes in ca-  
pite gestant.  
Lagnamah, ab-  
syathium, in  
gratissimi saporis  
herba; Me-  
taphorice res  
ingrata, molestis-  
noxia.*

And righteousness into hemlock, or wormwood, so the word properly signifies, and it is so rendered in other places, as *Jer. 9. 15. Lam. 3. 15. Amos 5. 7.* They abolished the noener, and condemned the innocent; they acquitted the wicked, and condemned the just; they favoured the rich, who could bribe well, and oppressed the poor who had nothing to give, *Amos 4. 1.* so that their Courts of Justice were as sweet as Honey to the wicked, but as baneful and bitter as gall to the godly.

*Fructum iusti-  
tie vocat pacem  
publicam, qua  
sub iniquis Ma-  
gisfratibus in  
absinthium  
degenerat. Gual.*

Justice in it self is a most sweet and pleasant thing; it is the very *asylum* and sanctuary of the poor, and the oppressed; but these luxurious ones had turned this sovereign Medicine into a deadly Poyson, and made that which is in it self sweet as honey, to become bitter as gall unto the oppressed, and as hemlock to the poor, which is a dangerous venomous weed, killing him that tastes of it.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 The patience of the Lord will not alwayes wait upon impenitent sinners.

He will not alwayes plow the rocks, and sow the sands, nor take pains with such ground as brings forth nothing but Briers and Thorns, such barren ground is nigh to cursing, *Heb. 6. 8. Isa. 5. 1. to 8.* The Lord had planted his Vineyard in an Horn of

See my Com.  
on *Hos. 13. 12.*  
*P. 4. 5.*

Oyl, &c. in a very fruitful soyl, from whence he might justly expect the generous fruit of sincere obedience; he fenced it about with his gracious Protection and good Laws; he removed all impediments of growth and fruitfulness; but when he came to look for grapes of obedience, behold the wilde grapes of cruelty, injustice, and disobedience; he therefore resolves to take away the hedge, break down the wall, lay it waste, and expose it to the fury of every wild beast. Barren trees are good for nothing but fuel, *Mark 3. 10. Mark 11. 13. Luke 13. 6. to 10.* When the Lord by his Word and Spirit hath long striven with men, labouring to bring them to Repenrance, but they will not be wrought upon, but are like the Cypress tree, the more it is watered, the more it withers; the Lord at last resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to destroy them, *Gen. 6. 11 & 12. Isa. 1. 5. Jer. 17. 6. &c.*

12 *Proverbial speeches are commendable.* The Lord himself useth them in Scripture. All Proverbs are commendable, especially sacred ones. They are short, witty, pithy, concise speeches, like jewels that containe much worth in a little room. They prove themselves, and will have no nay: they save many words, and help the memory; a man cannot tell how well to forget them, or gain-say them. Hence Solomon abounded with them; and Christ a greater than Solomon occasionally used them; as, *No man can serve two Masters. A tree is known by his fruit. He that humbles himself shall be exalted. It is better to give than to receive.* &c. And it is observed, that the more learned any men are, the more pithy, sententious, and Proverbial they are; as we see in *Plato, Plutarch, Seneca, Aristotle, &c.*

3 Obf. *Perverting of Justice is a Land-destroying fin.*  
There is not a more infallible fore-runner of a Nations ru-  
ine, than when Courts of Justice are turned into Courts of  
injustice; and Courts of Equity become Courts of inquiry.  
This turning of Justice into Gall, brings gall and sorrow with  
it to a Land, *Jam. 8. 14. & 9. 15. Hof. 10. 4, 5.* it caused  
*Jerusalem's* day to draw neer, *Ezek. 22. 6, 7.* A corrupt Judge  
is a cold Fire, a dark Sun, a dry Sea. A false Teacher that  
poysons Souls, an unskilful Physician that destroyes Bodies,  
and a corrupt Judge that perverts Justice, are three great E-  
vils; the one destroyes the fountain of *Piety*, the other de-  
stroyes

stroyes the fountains of Sunnity, and the third destroyes the fountain of Christ's Policy. If a man bee oppressed, hee flies to Courts of Justice for refuge, and if they shall give him a draught of poison, or hemlock to kill him, this cries aloud for justice against such, *Isa. 7. Jer. 17. 28. 29.* Execution of Justice is a most sweet and pleasant thing to God, no Hony so delightful to us as this is to him. How great then is their sin, who turn righteousness into wrong, sweet into bitter, and make poysons of medicines? See what God saith to such, *Amar 4. 1.*

Corruptio optimi  
est corruptiss-  
ima. See my  
Copy on Plal.  
83. 1.

## VERSE 13.

*They which rejoyce in a thing of nought, which say, Have we not taken to us horns by our own strength?*

**I**N the first Verse of this Chapter, the Prophet upbraids the Israelites with their carnal confidence; and in this Verse he amplifies that exprobration: Yee are they (saith he) which rejoyce in things of nought, and glory in your own strength, to your own confusion, as it follows, *vers. 14.*

In this verse we have this Peoples sin, *They rejoyce in a thing of nought*: And in the next verse we have their punishment.

**Q.** The Question will be, what is meant by a thing of nought, or of no moment, here?

**A.** By a thing of nought, 1. Some conceive an Idol is meant, which is called a thing of nought, or *nothing*, *an Idol is nothing*, 1 *Cor. 8. 4.* *materially* it may be wood or stone, but *formally* it is nothing. Though it may be something in respect of mens vain conceits; yet it is nothing in respect of any Divine power or vertue, for it can neither hurt nor help. These people worshipt the Calves, and worshipt *Baal*, and other Idols, and so might be said to rejoyce in things of nought. But, 2.

Others conceive they rejoyced in Creature comforts and Priviledges, such as Riches, blonour, Power, Success, the Covenants, Circumcision, Adoption, &c. all these they boasted and bragged of, as if they could have sheltered them from Gods Wrath, but since they were rebellious and disobedient, the Prophet tells them they should doe them no good in the day of Gods Wrath, for they were but things of nought; and meer nothing compared with God; and in no wise to be rested in.

3 And most genuinely, *To rejoyce in a thing of nought*, is to rejoyce in an arm of flesh, to rejoyce in Armies, Strength, Victories

Idola bar, in  
non verbo, ver-  
bum idem est  
quod res; in  
bono verbo, i. e.  
in non re, in vi-  
bita, in re nulli-  
us momenti, i. e.  
in potentia ver-  
bra.

1 Cor. 8. 4

ories, and Successes: for so it follows in the latter part of the verse, which is exegetical, and illustrates the former, *They rejoiced in a thing of nought*. What's that? why yee say, *Have we not taken to us Horns by our owne strength?* it was their constant practise to rejoyce in a thing of nought, and to trust in their owne strength.

By *Horns* here is meant the power, dominion, glory, and excellency of a people. It is a Metaphor taken from horned Beasts, whose strength and beauty lyes in their horns. So *Dani* 33. 17. & *Sam*. 2. 1. 10. *Job* 16. 15. *Psal*. 92. 10. & 112. 9. & 132. 17. & 148. 14.

Thus they said, viz. in their hearts, and thoughts at least, for what words are to us, that thoughts are to God: his Word and Spirit search the inward parts of the Soul, *Jer*. 17. 10. 1 *Cor*. 2. 10. they thought they had made themselves strong and impregnable by their own power. The Prophet seems to allude to the power and success which *Jeroboam* the second, one of the Kings of *Israel* had, in whose reign *Amos* Propheied. This King was very successful and prosperous, he enlarged the borders of the Kingdom, and took divers Cities from the *Syrians*, 2 *King*. 14. 25, 27, 28. So *Judah* was very successful under King *Azariah*, as appears, 2 *Chron*. 26. 1. to 17. these Victories and Successes made them proud, and list up their horns, as if by their owne power and policy they had got the victory. Thus they rejoyced in a thing of nought, as if by their owne strength they had enlarged their borders, and could now defend themselves against foreign invasions.

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *Have we not taken to our selves horns by our owne strength?* See what impious Arrogance, and Vain-glorious boasting here is, every Word gives a crake. Have not we taken, Have not we taken to us, have not we taken to us *Horns*, yet more, Have not we taken to us *Horns by our owne strength?* They did all, God did nothing, he is not in any of their thoughts. I have read of Pope *Adrian*, who having built a stately Colledge at *Lovaine*, caused this to be written in golden letters over the gate, *Wrath* planted him, there was he born; *Lovaine* watered him, there he got Learning; and *Cesar* gave the increase, for he made him a Cardinal: one wittily comes after and subscribes, *Hic Deus nihil fecit*. God had nothing to doe here. So these men ascribed all to themselves, and



shut out God, Though the Lord by an Almighty hand had brought them out of *Egypt* into the Land of *Canaan*, and drove out the *Canaanites* before them, and by a strong hand preserved them in that good Land; yet so proud, ungrateful, and dis-ingenuous were they grown, that they sacrificed to their owne Net, and assumed all to themselves, saying, Have we not gotten these Victories by our owne strength? The Lord can now no longer bear with this Sacrilegious robbing him, of the honour which was due, to his Name: and therefore in the next Verse he tells them, That he will raise up a Nation against them, that shall utterly destroy them.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Creatures excellency is all but vanity.*

Take the Quintessence of all the Riches, Power, Pomp, Beauty, Morality, and delights of the World, and put them in one scale, and put Vanity in the other, and they will prove lighter than vanity; and therefore they may well be called, *things of nought*. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
Psal. 73. 20. &  
Lapide in Amos  
6. 13. & Men-  
daz, in 1 Reg.  
2. Numb. 36.  
Annot. 25. p.  
355.

2 Obs. *Such is mans corruption and madness, that he rejoyneth in things of nought.*

He dislikes what is truly good, and delights in vanity, *Psal. 6. 6, 7*. Hence *Solomon*, spends the whole Book of *Ecclesiastes* in dissuading men from this folly and madness. *St. Chrysostom* tells us, that if he had a voyce like Thunder, and a mighty Mountain for his Pulpit, and all the Men and Women in the World for his Auditory, he would chuse that Text to preach on, *Psal. 4. 2. O yee sons of men, how long will yee love vanity?*

3 *Gods Word is a critical word.*

W. Traps True  
Treasure, ch. 3.  
Sect. 3. p. 86. &  
Glossii Philo-  
log. lib. 1. Tr. 3.  
S. 3. mibi. p. 201.

It discovers the thoughts and intents of mans hearts, and layes their inside open, so great is its power and efficacy. Gods Word resembles God, as he is the only Heart-searching God, so his Word is the only Heart-searching Word. It pierceth to the very Marrow, and discovers to us our most secret thoughts and affections, *Heb. 4. 12.* and can tell us, whether we delight in things of nought.

4 *Wicked men ascribe that to their owne power and policy, which is due to Gods Power, and Grace.*

If they have success and victory, they presently lift up their Horns and push at God, that they may the better Sacrifice to their own Net, and burn incense to their drag. *Hab. 1. 15, 16.*

Thus

Thus *Senacherib* King of *Assyria* boasted of his power and success, as if he could conquer not only *Jerusalem*, but its God also, *Isa.* 36. Thus that *Heathen* that went forth to Battle, being admonished to call upon the Gods, answered, *that it was for cowards to pray*, as for himself, he was resolved to try his own strength in Battle, he did so, and was slain. Let others kiss their own hands, *Job* 31. 27. and ascribe all to Idols and themselves; but let us, with all the Servants of God, ascribe the glory of all we are, or have, to God alone, for what have we that we have not received from him? *1 King* 8. 24. *Psal.* 20. 7. & 44. 5, 6, 7, 8. & 89. 9, 10, 17, 18. *See my Com.*  
 it is by the grace of God that we are what we are, *1 Cor.* 15. 10. *on 2 Tim.* 4. 8. p. 410.

## VER. 14.

*But behold, I will raise up against you a Nation, O house of Israel; saith the Lord the God of Hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of Hemoth, unto the river of the Wilderness.*

THESE words contain the Conclusion of the fifth Sermon, which *Amos* made to this People. We have seen their Sin before, we are now come to their Suffering. This people gloried in things of nought, and would not believe the Prophets words, but now they should be taught by blows, and bee made to feel what they would not fear, and therefore the Prophet begins with a *but*; *But behold*, q. d. *you think by your own strength and power to subdue your enemies, but I will raise up against you the Assyrian, a mighty Nation, that shall chase you from one end of the Land to another.*

The Lord had told them before of Judgements in general that should come upon them for their sins, now he comes to particularize the Judgement; he tells them who shall inflict it, on whom, and how farre. They had forsaken God, and cast him off, and now he forsook them, they trusted to their own strength but God sends against them a stronger than they, that should subdue them. *But I will raise up against you a Nation, &c.*

In the words we have, 1. The Adversative Particle, *But*.

2 The Note of Attention, *Behold*.

3 The matter to be attended, *I will raise up against you a Nation*, viz. the *Assyrian* against *Israel*, and the *Babylonian* against *Judah*; for the bounds here set for the promised Land, do imply both Kingdoms, primarily *Israel* and *Samaria*, and secondarily, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*; as I have shewed on Vers. 1.

The Kingdom of *Israel* was overthrown by *Salmaneser* King of *Assyria*,

*Assyria*, and the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*, by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*; these God raised up to cool their courage, and abate their pride.

*Lachetz, con-*  
*tavit, pressit,*  
*oppressit, afflix-*  
*it, ut videre*  
*est, Judg. 4. 3.*  
*1 Sam. 10. 18.*  
*Plal. 106. 42*

4 The Lord tells them what this Nation shall doe to *Israel*; They shall afflict them, they shall press and oppress, them by violence and Tyranny; they shall hem them in, and so straiten them, that none shall escape.

5 Here is the extent of this affliction, and how farre it shall go, and that is from *Hemath*, which was situate in the North border of *Canaan*, looking Eastward, *vers. 2. Thus the river of the wilderness*; that is, to *Sichor*, a river of *Egypt* in the South, looking Westward, and parting the Land of *Israel* from the Land of *Egypt*, *Numb. 34. 5, 8. Josh. 13. 3, 5. & 15. 47. 1 Chron. 13. 5* is called the river of the Desert, because it came out of the Desert; some think it was the river *Nilus*, but the bounds of *Canaan* never extended so farre. *Jeroboam* had re-gained those bounds to *Israel*, they were proud of the Prize; but about thirty years after *Tiglath-Pileser* re-gained it all from *Israel*, and laid it to the *Assyrians*; and not long after comes *Salmansar* the King of *Assyria*, and takes *Samaria*, and subdues the whole Kingdom of *Israel*. About one hundred years after, *Judah* was carried captive into *Babylon*, according to that woe denounced against them, *ver. 1. When Wars arise yet some use to escape*, but here the Lord threatens, that they shall be oppressed from one end of the Land to another. Though the Country were large and spacious, and there were many ways to escape, yet the enemy should beset them so strictly that there should be no escaping, but all should goe into Captivity. As all had sinned, so all should now suffer for sin. So that this verse seems to be a kind of *Antithesis*, and check to their Carnal confidence in their own strength and success, *q. d.* it is true, your King *Jeroboam* hath recovered your borders, but I will send one that shall recover all from you again. He restored all from *Hemath* to the Sea of the Plain; and I will send the *Assyrians* who shall wast *Israel* from *Hemath* to the Sea, *i. e.* from North to South, and from East to West; and then shall you see how infirm your firmness was; when your Valour shall be turned into weakness, your Glory into shame, and your Mirth into mourning.

6 Who is it that saith all this? why it is one that can and will perform it, *It is the Lord, the God of Hosts*; who hath the Army of the *Assyrians*, and all other Armies at his beck and command, *vers. 8.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Bridegroom before destruction.* In the precedent verse we read of *Israel's* Pride, and Carnal confidence, and now see their fall. When pride is in the saddle, destruction is on the crupper, Dan 4. 30. we read of *Nebuchadnezzar's* pride, and ver. 31. we read of his fall. Children that hold by their own coats pull themselves down; by his own strength shall no man prevail, 1 Sam. 2. 9. Ezek 28. 9.

2. *The Lord is true in all his Threatnings.* Not one word shall fail of all that he hath spoken; against a rebellious people. He threatened to send the *Assyrian* against *Israel* here; & he did it. He threatened to send the *Babylonian* against *Judah*, and they came at last.

3. *When people are rejoicing and most secure, then usually Judgements are nearest.* In the precedent verse they were rejoicing, and in this verse comes their ruine. When the old World was buying, selling, marrying, and merry-making, then came the Flood and swept them all away, Mat. 24. 38, 39. When Bellsring, Canons roar, Fires flame, and there is nothing but mirth and jollity, then may destruction be at the door. When men cry Peace, peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction, 1 Thes. 5. 3. 2 Pet. 2. 1.

4. *It is God who riseth up enemies against a rebellious people. I will raise up a Nation against you.* War is one of Gods sore Judgements which he sends against a people of his wrath, Ezek. 14. 21. Amos 4. 10. when men will not serve God with gladness and sincerity in abundance; then he makes them serve their enemies in want and misery, Deut. 28. 47, 48. Isa. 42. 24, 25. The *Assyrian* is but Gods Rod, his Staff, his Axe, his Saw, to scourge, bear, heav, and divide; they are but Instruments, it is God that is the Agent.

5. *Unbelief in sin brings universality in suffering.* As the Land had been filled from corner to corner with uncleanness, so now it should be answerably filled with punishment. National Sins bring National Plagues, Ezra 9. 10, 11. When all the old World was corrupt, then came the Flood and swept them all away. When all *Sodom*, and all *Jerusalem* were given to wickedness, then came Judgements and destroyed them. Multitudes in sin are so far from Patronizing the sinners, that it hastens wrath.

6. *Sin brings a people into a desperate condition.* It brings them into such straits, that they know not what way to turn themselves. The Land of *Canaan* was spacious, and there were many ways of escaping, but their sins had brought things to that pass, that they were surrounded

See more on  
Hof. 13. 16.  
p. 109. See an  
excellent Ser.  
of Mr. Barrow  
Exod. 23. 2. p.  
14 at the end of  
his Exposition  
of Mr. Perkins  
Catech.

rounded with enemies, and there was none to deliver them.

7 As Kingdoms have their times of flourishing, so they have their times of fading too. *Israel* flourished, and was successful under *Jeroboam*, but they fade and fall in the reign of *King Hoshea*. The *Grecian*, *Babylonian*, and *Persian* Monarchies which were sometimes famous through the world, are now mouldred away, and come to nothing, and so shall the *Roman*.

See Greenhill on  
Ezek. 26. 17.  
Obf. 3. p. 442.

S.

Judg. 1. 7

V. Caryl on Job  
15. 25. Obf. 1.  
p. 131. Greenhill  
on Ezek. 7. 18.  
p. 75.  
There was one  
*Martin* a vile  
man, that  
threatned to  
slit a godly  
Minister's nose  
in Piedmourne,  
that was assaul-  
ted by a Woolf,  
which bit off  
his nose, so that  
he dyed thereof  
mad. Fox Book  
of Martyrs,  
2 Vol. p. 202.

8 God usually retaliates Sinners, and pays them in their own coin. This people had for a long time pressed the Lord with their sins, *Amos* 2. 13. and now themselves are pressed and oppressed with Judgments. *Sodom*, and *Gomorah*, that burnt in lust, were burnt with fire. *Nadab*, and *Abihu*, that offered strange fire, perished by strange fire from the Lord. *Asa*, that set the Prophet in the Stocks, had a disease in his feet. *Babylon*, that shed the blood of Saints, hath blood given her to drink. Hee that on earth denied a crumb of Bread, in Hell shall not have a drop of water, *Luk.* 16. 24, 25. They that delight in left-hand blessings, *Prov.* 3. 16. shall be placed with the Goats on the left hand, *Mat.* 25. 33. and those that delight in darkness, shall be sent to darkness, *2 Pet.* 2. 17. They that say unto God, Depart now, he will say unto them, Depart at the last Day. He that will not owne Christs truth now, shall not be owned by him then. They that trample upon the Saints here, the Saints shall tread them under their feet hereafter, *Micha* 4. 11, 12, 13. & 7. 10. so that all the wicked at last shall be compelled to say with *Adonibezek*, *Judg.* 1. As I have done, so hath the Lord rewarded me. The *Egyptians* that worshipped creeping things, were punished with Frogs, and other creeping things. *Demosthenes* and *Tully*, that were proud of their Eloquence, perished by it. *Milo*, that gloried in his strength, was ruined by it. *Absalom*, that was proud of his Hair, it helped to hang him, *2 Sam.* 18. 9. Let every one then take notice of his sin by the suffering, and silence murmuring.

We have now seen the Sins that ruined *Israel*, viz. Idolatry, Superstition, Apostasy, Oppression, Luxury, Tyranny, Injustice, and Carnal confidence, &c. If these Sins reign in *England*, what can we expect but that the Lord should send some *Assyrian* upon us, to avenge the quarrel of his Covenant on us? &c.

FINIS.



AN  
**EXPOSITION,**  
 WITH  
 Practical OBSERVATIONS  
 UPON  
 The Seventh Chapter of *Amos*.

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VERSE 1, 2, 3.

*Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold, he formed Grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.*

*And it came to pass after they had made an end of eating the grass of the Land, then I said, O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise? for hee is small.*

*The Lord repented for this, it shall not be, saith the Lord.*



His Chapter contains the Sixth Sermon of *Amos*, wherein are three Visions, to which are annex the issue and operation of them, *vers.* 10, 11, 12.

The Prophet had before plainly and clearly set down Gods Judgements against this People, that none might complaine of obscurity; yet now hee



comes to speak more mystically, in five Types and Visions, if by any means he might work upon them. Two Visions were have, Chap. 8. 1, &c. & 9. 1, &c. and three in the nine first Verses of this Chapter, setting forth the patience and long-suffering of God towards this rebellious People.

The three Types or Similies are of

Grashoppers,	{	Which adumbrate three Judgements,	{	Famine, War, and utter de- struction.
Fire,				
A Plumb-line,				

The first Judgement which *Amos* saw was an army of Grashoppers, Locusts, or Green-worms, which should devour the Grass and Corn, and this shadowed out the want of all things, *vers.* 1, 2.

2 That of *Fire*, devouring the great deep, denotes Warre, with the miseries that attend it, *vers.* 4. Both these had ruined *Israel*, but that at the mediation and intercession of the Prophet they were kept off for a time, *vers.* 2, 3, 5, 6. the duty of a faithful Pastor is to Pray and Preach, *Amos* doth both these; he shewes them their Sins, and Gods Judgements due unto them for them, yet withall he prays for the averting of them, and was heard for that time, till at last the malady was past cure.

3 That of a *Plumb-line* in the hand of God, signified the utter overthrow both of the Oeconomical, Political, and Ecclesiastical estate of the Kingdom. God had measured out a time for them to repent in, but they were become incurable, and therefore the Lord here threatens to spare them no longer, and to pass by them no more, *vers.* 8. nor yet to accept of any more mediation for them; and therefore we doe not read that ever the Prophet interceded for the averting of this Judgement, as he had done for the former; so long as there was hope hee prayed for them, but since they were incorrigible he forbears.

4 We have the slanderous accusation of *Amaziah* the Priest of *Bethel* (who being nettled with the Prophesie, and freedome of speech used by this blunt and down-right Prophet against both King and Kingdom) stirs up King *Jeroboam* the second against *Amos*, under pretence of being a seditious, turbulent person, and one that had conspired against the

the King, *vers. 10, 11.* Amos hath conspired against the King.

2 The more to incense the King against him, he aggravates his Crimes, as first, that he acted this Treason, not secretly, but openly: *He hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel.*

2 That the People were much troubled at his Doctrine, to the hazard of the Kingdome: *The Kingdome is not able to bear his words.*

3 Here is *Amaziab's* fraudulent advice, under pretence of love and kindness, he would not have *Amos* come any more to *Babel*, lest he should run himself into danger; and therefore he advieth him to pack out of the Kingdome with all speed, and to get into *Judeah* his owne Country, and to Prophesie there. *Vers. 12.*

4 We have *Amos* his bold reply to this false Prophets calumniation, *vers. 14, 15.* where he asserts and justifies his calling, shewing,

1 Negatively, that he was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son.

2 Affirmatively, *That he was an Herdsman.*

3 How he was called to be a Prophet, he came not of his owne accord to the work, but the Lord said to me, *Goe Prophesie, vers. 15.*

4 Here is *Amos* his Charge, to which he was primarily sent, and that was to the ten Tribes, *vers. 15. Goe Prophesie to Israel*; he durst not therefore forsake his Charge assigned him by God, and flee into *Judea*, (as *Amaziab* would have had him) but he resolved to stand his ground, and keep to his Commission, and preach to *Israel* though he dyed for it, as he did, being slaine (say some) by *Amaziab's* Son.

5 Here is a five-fold Judgement threatened by *Amos* against this Persecuting Prelate, *vers. 17.* he should suffer in his Wife, in his Children, in his Possessions, in his owne Person, and in the whole Kingdome, which he should see goe into Captivity.

## VER. 1.

*Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto me, and behold he formed Grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth; and loe it was the latter growth after the Kings mowings.*

**I**N this Chapter we have three Visions, the first whereof is that of *devouring Locusts*, which left little or nothing behind them. Where we have,

1 The Person revealing the Vision to the Prophet, and that is, the Lord, *Thus hath the Lord God shewed me*, in a Propheticall Vision, the Judgements which he is about to bring upon *Israel*. This he mentions to procure the more authority to what he spake, that they might see they were not figments, or dreams of his owne inventing.

See Dr. Thomas  
Taylor on Amos  
3. 11. p. 215.  
216. fol.

2 Here is the Vision it self, or what the Lord shewed him, and that is *Grasshoppers*, and *behold he formed Grasshoppers*. He did not call out Grasshoppers already made, but he saw the Lord forming and framing a new Army of Grasshoppers out of the dust of the earth, or the like; which to Gods Omnipotency was as easie, as to bring out an Army of Grasshoppers already made.

Jotser, fittor, 2  
Jaisar, finxit,  
formavit, Isa.  
43. 1. Zach.  
12. 1.

Obj. But most call these Grasshoppers *Locusts*, and so the very same word is rendred, Isa. 33. 4. so that what shall we call them, Grasshoppers, or Locusts?

I answer, both; that is, they are Grasshopper-Locusts. To clear this, you must know that there were several sorts of Locusts mentioned in the Scripture, some were silent, and some vocal; some good, and for food, Mat. 3. 4. Others were obnoxious and hurtful, as here in the text, and of these there were three sorts:

See Ainsworth  
on Levit. 11. 22

- 1 Locust-Solhem,
  - 2 Locust-Horgel,
  - 3 Locust-Hagab.
- } Levit. 11. 22.

Gob, Gobe, Locusta, bruchi, à radice Gabah, exaltavit, quia elevant & exaltant pedes.

And this last is the Locust-Grasshopper in the text. It was a devouring Insect, that went in great multitudes together, eating up all before them, and so bringing a Famine on the places where

where they came, *Joel* 1. 4, 6. & 2. 11. they are called a Nation, and an Army of Vermines for their swarms and multitudes.

*Q. A second Quere is, Whether these Locusts must be taken Literally, or Metaphorically, properly or symbolically?*

*Ans.* 1. They may be taken literally for an Army of Insects, which devour the fruites of the earth, and so cause a famine; this is most genuine here, and it was one of those rods with which God chastened *Israel*, *Amos* 4. 9. as for War, he speaks of that, *vers.* 4. but this especially relates to famine, and some Judgements begun before the time of *Jeroboam* the second.

2 Others take them Metaphorically, for any kind of devastation or wasting whatsoever; or else for the *Assyrians*, which like so many Locusts should over-run the Land of *Israel*, and devour all before them. Hence the *Assyrian* is compared to a Razor, which should shave them even to the skin, *Isa.* 7. 20.

3 Here is the Time these Locusts were formed, and that is, 1. Generally, in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth. 2. More particularly, It was the latter growth after the Kings mowings. After the first fleece was mowed off for the use of the Kings horses, which was wont to be sooner than the common mowth. Locusts love not to feed on ripe and hard things: their delight is in young and tender things; and therefore they are very destructive to Immanths, and new-sown fields. These hurtful Vermines God sent in abundance amongst them.

And here againe Interpreters differ, 1 Some take this mowing or shearing of the Grasse for the grazing with the Kings sheep, whose feeding is called a cropping of the grasse. *Ter centum visitant dum meta juvenes.* *Virg. Georg. l. 1.* But this hath no rooting in the text; for though the word doe signifie shearings, yet it is used for mowen grasse, *Psal.* 72. 6. *Achar gize hammolech, post coronem regis.*

2 Others take it, for the mowing not only of Grasse, but of Corn also in the Fields; for Husbandmen (especially in those fruitful regions) used to mow their luxuriant Corn, that it might thicken and stand the better; and if this latter blade were eaten by Insects or Locusts, the Harvest was lost, and Famine ensued. The vulgar Latine mistaking the Original, render it, *Serotinus imber*, the latter rain, but the word is,

*Lekesh, herba serotina, fructus cordum*) the latter moweth, and not the latter rain; and here again some fly to Metaphors, and conceive that this mowing adumbrates the devastation of *Israel* by the *Assyrian*; as fields when they are mowen, and their fleece is gone, are naked and deformed, so God would raise up the *Assyrian* that should rob them of their riches, and fleece them for their sins.

The flourishing Grass notes the flourishing condition of *Israel*, but they abusing that condition, the Lord mowed them.  
1. More lightly and overtly, by *Pul* King of *Assyria*, 1 *Chro.* 5. 26. 2. More severely, by *Benhadad* King of *Syria*, who afflicted them very sore, and gained much of their Land and riches from them.

3 There was a latter growth in the dayes of *Jeroboam* the second, when *Israel* began to flourish, and recover its losses, 2 *King.* 14. 25. but after this they grew worse and worse, till the Lord swept them out of the Land, and would hear no more prayers for them.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 Formerly God revealed his mind to the Prophets (as he did here to *Amos*) by *Types and Visions*, *Jer.* 1. 18. & 24. 1. *Ezek.* 1. *Heb.* 1. 1. See more of this, *Amos* 8. 1: *Obs.* 3.

2 All our afflictions come from God.

See D. Thomas  
Taylor on *Amos*  
8. 11, 12. p.  
224. folio.

It is he that forms the Locusts, sends Fire, metres out the very Time, Quantity, Quality, and Duration of all our sufferings; whatever it be, it is he that forms it, *Jer.* 18. 18. there is no evil of this kind in the City, but the Lord doth it, *Amos* 3. 6. This must make us patient and silent, since it is the Lord that doth it, *Psal.* 39. 9.

3 God hath Armies of Insects, and little contemptible Creatures wherewith to punish disobedient people.

He needs not men to destroy us, he hath Frogs and Flies, Lice and Locusts, and these shall doe it, *Exod.* 10. 14. *Deut.* 28. 38, 42, 2 *Chron.* 7. 13. *Psal.* 78. 46. *Joel* 1. 4. much of Gods might is seen in these little Armies, they all fulfill the word of Gods command, Let none then murmur at second causes, but still look up to the first, lest by fretting at our troubles, we double them.

Nec in ulla ma-  
gis quam in  
his tota natura  
est *Pliny Nat.*  
*Hist.* l. 11. c. 1.

4 Naturally we are very stupid and senseless under Gods hand.

Though he smite us, yet we grieve not, *Isa. 9. 12, 13. Jer. 5. 3.* and though his hand be lifted up against us, yet we will not see, *Isa. 26. 11.* The Judgement it self here was visible, and yet they had not eyes to see it : yea though the Prophet held it forth to them by a sensible Type, and useth a double *Ecce*, ( Behold, loe ) to excite them and quicken attention. No wonder that our Saviour cryed, O hard and slow of heart, not to beleieve what God hath spoken by his Words and Works, *Luke 24. 25.*

5 When People are most prosperous, many times they are nearest a fall.

*Israel* had success and victories but a little before, there was a shooting up of the latter growth, they lived in peace and plenty forty one years, they were grown rich, proud, and secure, and then comes the Locust and devours them ; no sooner had they gotten a little greenness, but the *Assyrian* devours it. As Herbs when they come to flower, begin to wither ; or as the Sun when it comes to the *Zenith*, then it declines ; so man in his best estate is altogether vanity, *Psal. 39. 5.* not only in his worst estate, when Old age hath seized on him, but in his flourishing and most prosperous condition, man is but a vaine thing. Be jealous then over your selves when you abound with those Creature comforts, be like Pigeons, when they fare best they are most fearful. It is good to think of War in times of Peace, and of Famine in times of Plenty, we know not what changes may come in the world, it is good to fear the worst, as *Job* did, *Job 3. 25.*

6 Gods Judgements usually are gradual.

As men sin gradually, and grow from one degree of wickedness to another ; so God is gradual in his punishments. First, he begins with lesser rods, and they being slighted he brings forth greater, and plagues men seven times more according to their sins. 1. He begins here with Locusts, and destroys the fruites of the earth. 2. He takes away part of their Land from them. 3. He takes away the whole Kingdom, and sends away the people into captivity.



## VERSE 2.

*And it came to passe, that when they had made an end of eating the Grasse of the Land, then I said, O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for hee is small?*

**T**He Prophet understanding the Myſtery of the Viſion, and ſeeing how things grew to extremity, and obſerving that all the fruits of the earth both Corn and Graſs were like to be ſuddenly conſumed by the devouring Locuſts, and ſo a fearful Famine would come upon the Land; he betakes himſelf to his Prayers, as the beſt remedy againſt ſuch a malady, *1 King. 8. 37.* he deprecates the Judgement, and prevails. So that here is,

1 The Judgement threatned, and that is the *Famine*, one of Gods ſore Judgements, *Ezek. 14. 31.*

2 Here is the means that was uſed for the ſtopping of the execution of it, and that was the prayers of the Prophet, and other good people. This Prayer is *Argumentative*, it is ſhort, but ſweet; little in words, but full of matter; little for quantity, but full of faith, as appears by the ſpeedy answer, and the good effect which it had. God delights not in babling, or multiplicity of words, *Eccleſ. 5. 2.* it is the faith and fervour of the Perſon praying, and not the bare words which God regards.

The Prophet uſeth two Arguments, to move the Lord to ſhew mercy to them. The firſt is drawn from the Covenant of Free-grace, which God made with his people, it is *Jacob* that is in diſtreſs, *by whom ſhall Jacob arise?* *q. d.* I plead not for *Babylonians, Egyptians, Affyrians*, or any barbarous Nation, that know thee not; but my ſuit is to thee in the behalf of thine owne Church and choſen, it is for *Jacob* thine inheritance, which is near and dear to thee, that hath made thy ſervant thus bold to ſpeak unto thee, *Pſa. 105. 6. & 135. 4. Iſa. 19. ult. Jer. 2. 14.* Remember O Lord thy Covenant made with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, ſpare thy people, pity thine inheritance; there is nothing works more upon God than the remembrance of the Covenant of Free-grace which  
he

he hath made with his people ; he delights in that, *Dent. 7. 9.*  
12. and therefore the Saints fo oft urge it, *Exod. 32. 13. Pfal.*  
*74. 20.*

By *Jacob* here is primarily meant the ten Tribes, or the  
*Ifraelites* which were the posterity of *Jacob* ; though *Judah* be  
not totally excluded, for *Amos* oft glanceth at them also, *A-*  
*mos 2. 5. & 6. 1.*

A second Argument is drawn from the shattered, sad con-  
dition which this People were in, they were little, very little  
and low. O Lord forgive I beseech thee, by whom shall *Ja-*  
*cob* arise ? for he is small ; He is small and low in

*Katon, parvulus,* the word is  
used for small  
things, *Zach. 4.*  
*10.*

Men, { in } Spirituals { in } Church  
Money, { in } and { in } and  
Strength, { in } Temporals, { in } State.

1 They were little and low in Temporals, both in Num-  
ber, Riches, and Power, they were much impaired and wasted,  
by various calamities of Sword, Famine, and Pestilence, as  
appears by *chap. 4. & 2 King. 14. 26.* when *Jeroboam* the se-  
cond came to the Throne, *the Lord saw that the affliction of*  
*Israel was very bitter, for there was none shut up or left, nor any*  
*helper in Israel.*

2 They were low in Spirituals, in *Abahs* time the Worship  
of God was generally corrupted, his Truths despised, his  
Ministers persecuted, *1 King. 18. 4.* and such a general face  
of Idolatry had over-spread the Land, that *Elijah* complains  
he was left alone, *1 King. 19. 10.* and in the ninth verse of  
this Chapter, the Lord threatens to lay their Sanctuaries wast,  
and that they should have a famine not of Bread, but of the  
Word of God, *chap. 8. 11, 12.*

Thus the Prophet pleads, not *Jacobs* merit, but Gods mer-  
cy and free-grace, so much the original word imports, to be  
favourable, and propitious, to spare and pardon. The word  
is often used in the Law for forgiveness, upon oblation and  
intercession made by the Priest, *Numb. 14. 19. Levit. 4. 20, fuit, condona-*  
*vit.* *26, &c. Psal. 25. 11.* He first begs for pardon of their sin, for  
he knew right well, if the cause were removed the effect would  
quickly cease. Neither doth he plead *Jacobs* excellency, but  
his misery, to move the Lord to shew him mercy.

q. d. Consider O Lord the low and sad estate of thy people,

they are low in Temporals, and low in Spirituals, and few in number, and if thou still goe on thus with thy Judgements, all must perish, and there will be none left to praise thee; if thou shouldst enter into judgement with thy Servants, there were no abiding. But as it is the glory of a man to pass by an offence, so it will make much for thy glory to pardon and pass by the sins and transgressions of thy poor afflicted people. It makes not for thine honour, nor doth it suit with thy nature to afflict the afflicted, nor to oppress the oppressed; Hold then thy hand, spare thy People, and pity thy distressed flock.

Thus this good Prophet did commiserate their condition, and intercedes for the life of those who sought his death; it is true, he had plainly and powerfully reprov'd them for their sins, according to his place and calling, yet that they might see he did nothing out of hatred, but by office and command from God, not out of passion, but out of compassion to them; he now prays for them, and prevails.

*By whom shall Jacob arise?*

Or, who shall raise Jacob? or how should he subsist, if thou still pursue him with thy Judgements? The Original word *Kum* hath many significations, which hath caused these various lessons; it signifies to arise, to stand, to establish, and abide. Some render the word Transcursively, for to raise, *Who shall raise Jacob?* i. e. who shall raise and restore him, and make him happy in the enjoyment both of Temporals and Spirituals? Thus the sense is the same, take it which way you will.

*By whom shall he arise?*

The Prophet could not see who should effect this, and therefore he asketh the question, *By whom shall he arise?* he could discern no visible means how the weakness of Jacob should be strengthened, and the lowness of Jacob be exalted, and therefore he goes unto God by Prayer. As when the enemy is high we are apt to question, Who shall bring downe these Gyants, these sons of Anak, these great *Zanzumims* of the world. for they are high and mighty? So when the Church is low, and lies in the dust, our unbelief is apt to question its arising, *By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is low?*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 Afflictions are a means to bring us to God.

When all the fruit of the Land was almost devoured, now comes Praying, *Spave Lord*. We are all too like *Joab* in this, *Absolom* sent twice for him, but he would not come, at last he set fire on his Corn fields, and then *Joab* arose and came, 2 Sam. 14. 30, 31. Hence the Lord takes it for granted, that in our affliction we will seek him diligently, Hof. 5. ult. and so they did, Hof. 6. 1. and so did the Woman of *Canaan*, Mat. 15. 22. and the Prodigal, Luke 15. and *Jehosaphat*, 2 Chron. 20. 12. and *David*, Psal. 135. 1. and *Paul*, 2 Cor. 12. 9.

2 In Gods Ministers there must be a due temperance of sharpness and sweetness, of severity and mercy.

They must have a holy anger against sin, yet mourn withall for the hardness of mens hearts; so did our Saviour, *Mar.* 3. 5. so *Lot* reprov'd the *Sodomites*, yet calls them brethren, *Gen.* 19. 7. and *Moses* in his zeal is angry at the people for their Idolatry, yet prays for them, *Psal.* 106. So *Amos* here sharply inveighs against the sins of this People, yet takes up a Lamentation for them, *Amos* 5. 1. and here intercedes for them. Our zeal must be mixt with love, though we may and must sometimes reprove men sharply, *Titus* 1. 13. yet must we not forbear praying for them, 1 Sam. 12. 23. so did the Vinitor intercede for the barren Fig-tree, *Luke* 13. 6, 7, 8, 9. every Minister must be *Adamant & magnes*, he must harden his face like a flint, and have browes of brasse to oppose the wicked; yet must he withall be a Load-stone, by his amiable, tender, and compassionate carriage to win them to Christ; lying in the breach for them, and running hazards to save them from destruction, *Ezek.* 22. 30.

3 As it is the duty of all the godly, so especially of Gods Ministers to sympathize with Gods People in their misery, and to intercede for them at the Throne of grace.

We must not only preach, but also pray for our people; as it is their duty to pray for us, 2 Thes. 3. 2, 3. so it is our duty to pray for them, especially in their troubles; it is both commanded, *Joel* 1. 13. & 2. 17. *Ephes.* 6. 18. and commended to us by the examples of the Saints. *Abraham* intercedes for

*Sodom*, *Moses* for *Israel*, *Exod.* 32. 31, 32. *Jeremy* for the *Jewes*, *Jer.* 18. 20. yea so zealous was he in praying for them, that the Lord is faine to bid him hold, *Jer.* 7. 16. How earnestly did *Paul* pray for the *Jewes*, though they were his deadly enemies, *Rom.* 10. 1. *Phil.* 1. 4, 9. *Colos.* 1. 3, 9. *1 Thes.* 1. 2. As Natural fathers, so Spiritual ones (in a spiritual sense) should lay up a stock of prayers for their People. Thus the living are commanded to pray for the living, *Jam.* 5. 16. but we have neither Precept nor President of any that ever prayed for the dead, now whatsoever is not of faith is sin; but such Prayers have no foundation in the Word of God, therefore they cannot be of faith. Such prayers doe neither avayl the Saints in Heaven, nor the Damned in Hell, because both have an irrecoverable doome past upon them, as is fully proved by a Learned Pen.

*Willels Synops.*  
*Papism. controuv.*  
 9. Q. 2. P. 415.  
 & *Sharpins*  
*loc. com. de*  
*Purgatorio*, p.  
 272, & 6.

#### 4 Our Prayers must be Argumentative Prayers.

We must stirre up our selves that we may lay hold on God; using Arguments to move the Lord to pitty us. So doth *Amos* here, and so did *Abraham*, *Gen.* 18. 2, 3, &c. and *Jacob*, *Gen.* 32. 11, 12. and *Moses*, *Exod.* 32. 11, 12, 13. & *Ezra* 9. 9. & *Neh.* 9. & *Dan.* 9. & *David*, *Psal.* 79. 6, 7. & 88. 9. to 13. & 90. 13, 14. & 130. 3, 4. especially we should preis the Covenant; so doth *Amos* here, and *David*, *Psal.* 74. 20.

#### 5 In our Prayers we must plead mercy, and not merit.

The Prophet here begs for pardon and forgiveness because they were low, so doth *David*, *Psal.* 79. 8, 9. our Merit is Gods Mercy; it must needs be so, since all our righteousness is as filthy raggs. Hence *Nehemiah* when he had done great things for God, yet being conscious to himself of many infirmities, he beseecheth the Lord to spare him, according to the greatness of his mercy, *Neh.* 13. 22. So *Daniel*, a man highly beloved, yet begs for mercy and for pardon, *Dan.* 9. 18, 23.

#### 6 We must be earnest with God for the pardon of our sin.

So is the Prophet here, O Lord I beseech thee, pardon the sin of this People. He knew right well that sin was the cause of all their sorrow, and when this peccant humour was once removed, the effect would cease; and therefore the Church prayes, *Take away our iniquity and receive us graciously*, *Hol.* 14. 2. the godly can bear any suffering, but not sin. When the

Plague

See my Com.  
 on *Psal.* 82. 8.  
 p. 178.

Plague lay upon the people, David cries, *Take away the sin of thy Servant, and then the Plague will cease.*

7 Gods owne people by profession may be brought to a very low condition, both in Temporals and Spirituals.

So it was with *Israel* here, which made the Prophet question, *By whom shall he arise?* He was brought so low that hee could neither raise himself, neither was there any other that could help him up; their strength was so exhausted that there was no visible effectual means of their restoration. We may say of all Creature-comforts as *Job* said of Wisdome, *Job 28. 13, 13, 14.* Where shall Wisdome be found? the Earth saith, it is not in me; and the Depth saith, it is not in me, &c. so, where shall ayd. in troublous times be found? The Earth saith, It is not in me; Friends say, It is not in us; and Riches say, It is not in us, &c. It is only to be found in the Almighty; we are never so little or low but he can help us, there is nothing too high or too hard for him; though Salvation be not in our Hills, yet it is in Gods hand, *Jer. 3. 23.* he is the Lord of Hosts, and hath all power at command; and therefore the Prophet betakes himself to his Prayers as his best refuge, *O Lord I beseech thee save thy people.* This is one reason why the Lord lets things run to extremity, that he may drive us to our Prayers, as we may see in *Hesters* case. Now if ever we would raise a Land out of the dust,

See more in  
M. Good his  
Fast Ser. on  
Ames 7. 5.  
preacht 1646.  
See more in my  
Cem. on 2 Tim.  
3. 9. p. 182,  
456, 459.

1 We must raise our Prayers, be fervent in them, it is none but wrestling *Jacobs* that shall become prevailing *Israels*, *Hof. 12. 4.*

2 Raise your Faith, this layes hold on God, and ingagerth him in the Quarrel, whilst Creatures oppose. Creatures they may make some resistance, but when Omnipotency comes against impotency, there is no abiding. See what great things faith hath done, *Lieb. 11.*

3 Raise your Holiness, grow therein, be holy in all manner of conversation; God never yet destroyed an holy, obedient people, such holy ones are the glory of a Land, and upon all this glory there shall be a defence, *Isa. 4. 5.*



## VERSE 3.

*The Lord repented for this, It shall not be saith the Lord.*

*Hic apponit se-  
mum Prophe-  
ta, ut avertat  
iram Dei, ne per-  
dat, nec fuit  
frustra oratio  
ejus. Luther.*

*Fuit mutatio  
rei, non Dei;  
facti, non con-  
sili.*

**H**ERE we have the success and good effect of the Prophets Prayer, he prays in faith and is heard, the Lord holds his hand, and saith it shall not be; so willing is the Lord to be intreated for to spare his Church and People! *The Lord repented for this.* He changed not his eternal Decree, but suspended the full and final execution of it, according to his eternal Decree. When God is said to repent, it is an usual Anthropopathy, and speaking after the manner of men according to our capacity, *Gen. 6. 6. Exod. 32. 14. Jer. 26. 19.* for God is not as man that he should repent, *1 Sam. 15. 29.* and therefore it is added exegetically, *This shall not be,* it was no change in God, but only a stopping of the execution of the Judgement threatened, according to Gods Decree, such threatnings being conditional (as I have shewed before) what in justice he might have done, and have done them no wrong, yet such is his Mercy and Clemency that he will not do it, but waits yet longer for their return; *It shall not be* (saith the Lord) whose word is good security, the Locusts shall be recalled, they shall not devour *Israel*; I will at thy intercession spare them yet a little longer.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Prayers of the faithful are very powerful and successful.*

The Prophet can but speak here, and he presently speeds. What is it that Prayer hath not done? It is a kind of Omnipotent engine that layes all flat before it; if any thing can help at a dead life, it is this or nothing. All things are possible to faith, no Mountains of dangers, fears, or difficulties, but it removes them, *Mark 9. 23.* this binds as it were the hands of God, and commands the Commander of all things, *Isa. 45. 11.* The effectual fervent prayer of one righteous man (how much more of many) avails much, *Jam. 5. 16.* to these the Promise runs, *Psal. 34. 17. Joel 2. 17, 18.* God never sayes

to

*Continet hic lo-  
cus insignem  
consolationem,  
& illustre ex-  
emplum, quam  
sit efficax, &  
quam multum  
possit oratio fi-  
delis. Luther.*

to the seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vain, *Isa.* 45. 19. The Prayer of an holy *Moses*, *Samuel*, *Daniel*, &c. what hath it not done? If there had been but ten righteous persons in those five Sodomitical Cities, that is but two in a City, they had been spared. We should therefore love the godly, and value them according to their true worth, who can doe such great things by their prayers. It is the happiness of a Nation to have such men in it; praying Saints are the Pillars and Supporters of the world, and the blessings of a Land, *Isa.* 19. 24. they are such a blessing as preserves all other blessings amongst a people; they are the strength of a Land, *Zach.* 12. 5. the walls and bulwarks of a place; to save such praying holy ones, God will destroy both Kings and Kingdoms, *Isa.* 43. 3, 4. the Lord is alwayes nigh to help and to deliver them, *Deut.* 4. 7. they advance Gods Name, and set the Crown upon Gods head, giving the glory of all they have, or can doe to him alone, and therefore the Lord delights to make them glorious. So that the prayers of good men are very precious things, *Gen.* 30. 7. *Jeb.* 42. 8.

Obj. *The Prayers of an holy Amos might prevail much, but we are no Prophets?*

A. *Amos* was a man subject to infirmities as we are, and he was not heard as a Prophet, but for the Promises which all beleevers have interest in, as well as Prophets.

#### VERSE 4, 5, 6.

*Thus hath the Lord shewed me, and behold the Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part.*

*Then said I, O Lord God, cease I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?*

*The Lord repented for this, This also shall not be, saith the Lord God.*

**W**E are now come to the second Vision, and that is of *Fire*, denoting a greater Judgement than the former; Locusts devour but the blade and blossoms, but fire consumes both roots and fruits. The Lord had wasted many  
Rods

Rods in vaine upon them, he now casts them into the fire, to see whether that will melt or mend them. These three visions are a kind of Gradation; that of the Locusts was iad, that of Fire was worse, and that of a Plumb-line was worst of all. This Vision though it differ in matter, yet for method it is alike.

1 Here is the Preamble, or Preface to the Vision, *Thus hath the Lord God shewed me.*

2 Here is the Vision it self, with an *Ecce* in the front of it, *Behold, the Lord God called to contend by fire*; that is, by War, which the King of *Affyria* a fierce enemy should bring upon them.

3 Here is the fruit and effect of this fire.

1 *It devoured the great deep*, or it devoured a great abyss, and depth of waters. This fire devoured not only wood and waters above the earth, but also the waters inclosed in the hollow parts of the earth, from whence fountains and rivers doe issue; *Gen. 7. 11.*

*Tibom r. abba,*  
multiplicity of  
waters, or the  
deep Sea, *Exo.*  
*25. 5. Isa. 51.*  
*10. i. e. Populi,*  
*dominum &*  
*opum immens-*  
*itet. m. A. Lapide.*

By this devouring fire most understand the Kingdome of *Syria*, which was laid wast and totally devoured by *Tiglath-pileser* King of *Affyria*, *2 King. 16. 9.* and by the abyss of waters is here meant multitudes of people, as *Ezek. 31. 4. Revel. 17. 1.* the Whore sits upon many waters; that is, she hath rule and power over many people.

*Chelech, Pars,*  
*Portio, Posses-*  
*sio, Ioth. 15. 13.*  
*Psal. 16. 5.*

2 After this, *it did eate up a part*, and had devoured all but that the Prophet interceded for them; or it consumed a peece of the Land, or a part of the portion and possession of Gods people. By this is understood some part of *Israel*, viz. two Tribes and a half, which *Tiglath-Pileser* carried away Captive into *Affyria*, and thereupon is said to eate up a part of *Israel*, *2 King. 15. 29. 2 Chron. 5. 26. Isa. 9. 1, 2.*

3 Here is the Prophets sympathy, and sense of this Judgement, *vers. 5.* it put him upon Prayer, and made him deprecate the averting of it. Then said I, *O Lord God cease I beseech thee, by whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?* It is the very same Prayer, and the same Arguments that he used before, *vers. 2.* only in the place of forgiving, he puts *ceasing*, Cease Lord this thine anger against thy people, and the sheep of thy pasture; hold thy hand, for if thou thus goe on to afflict thy people, who shall remaine of *Jacob*? surely none at all. This  
for-

orbearing being a visible effect of pardon, he desires that God would manifest it; and so it is the same Prayer in effect with the former.

1 *Obf.* Hence note, that it is lawful (as occasion requires) to pray the same Prayer, and use the same Arguments as formerly we have done.

*Amos* doth so here, and speeds. So did Christ, *Mat.* 27. 41. he prayed the third time, saying the same words, this he did out of fervency of spirit.

2 *Obf.* We must persevere in Prayer for the people of God.

As their misery doth renew, so must our Prayers for them be renewed. Thus did *Amos*, God threatens a second Judgement, and *Amos* by a second Prayer averts that also. The work

is good, and no difficulties should discourage us. The Church is near and dear to God, tis his *Benlah* and *Hephzibah*, *Isa.* 62. 4. his beloved Spouse, and we never please him better than

See more in my  
Com on Psal.  
82. 8 p. 182.

when we are importunate with him for *Sions* good. Hence he so oft commands us to pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, and promiseth that they shall prosper who love it; yea he bids us command him when it is for the good of his Sons and Daughters, *Isa.* 45. 11.

4 Here is the good success and happy issue of his Prayer, he obtains his request, since it is for *Israel* that he prayes, it is but ask and have. By his Prayers and Tears he extinguisheth this fire when nothing else could doe it, and gets the Judgement suspended for a time, to see if their hard hearts would at length relent and return. This may incourage us much in this duty of Prayer.

*The Lord repented also for this: this also shall not be,* verf. 6. I will hold my hand (saith God) the fire which I threatned shall not yet come, the Land shall not be destroyed at this time. So gracious is the Lord, and ready to forgive, and so quickly he repents him of the evil which he intends against his people, especially when his Ministers intercede for them, *Joel* 2. 13. he afflicts not willingly, Judgement is his strange work, and Fury is not in him, *Isa.* 27. 4.

But though the Lord at the intercession of his Servants may suspend his fiery Judgements here (though oft-times hee pleads with them here by Fire, Sword, Famine, &c. *Isa.* 66. 15, 16. *Ezek.* 38. 22.) yet without repentance the fire of the

last Day will certainly devour them; God will then contend with fire, and execute the fierceness of his fury upon the workers of iniquity.

Brevitas oratio-  
nis Pathos ha-  
bet. Aretius.

3 *Obs.* Hence note, *That short Prayers full of faith and fervency, may prevail very much with God for a People.*

It is not the loudness, or the length, or the neat expressions which rake with God, 1 *King.* 18. 26. *Eccles.* 5. 2. *Mat.* 6. 7. & 7. 21. But it is the faith and sincerity of him that prays; poor broken Prayers coming from a broken heart are of great worth in the sight of God, *Matth.* 15. 25. *Eli*ahs Prayer was short and pithy, and prevailed, 1 *King.* 18. 36. so *Psal.* 6. 3. *My soul is sore vexed, but thou O Lord how long, viz. wilt thou delay to help me?* It is an abrupt broken speech, but God can pick sense out of our non-sense.

Prayer is a work of the Heart, and not of the Tongue, words are but the out-side of Prayer, it is the Hearts desire which God eyes and respects, and if thy affections fly aloft, though thy words doe but creep, yet thy faith shall get what thy words cannot; yea if thou canst not speak, yet if thou canst weep, God will hear the voice of thy weeping; Tears have a voice, *Psal.* 6. 8. as well as words.

*The Lord called to contend with fire.*

Or, the Lord proclaimed that he would contend with fire, or plead, that is, punish them with fire. Thus *Hos.* 4. 1. The Lord hath a Controversie, that is, a Plea or Process, not only verbal, but real; that is, he had Judgements ready to execute on them. This contending notes *Israels* obstinacy; we use not to contend, or goe to suit, till we have tried all other means to get our right, yet cannot get it, then we are constrained to contend. As War, so Law, is, or ought to be our last refuge. God had used all means to win this People, but in vaine, and therefore he is now constrained to contend with Fire and Sword against them.

*Deus juridice  
cisavit, & in  
jus ad suum  
tribunal vocavit  
terram Israel,  
provocans ad  
ignem, & litem  
illa intendens,  
ut ageret eam  
re armis.* Mariana. *Larib* baesb, ad litigandum in i. e. cum igne. *Rib* significat in judicio litigare, contendere, & causam agere, *lla.* 1. 18. & 3. 13.

*Q.* But what is meant by Fire here?

*A.* Interpreters vary. 1. Some take it Literally, for some extraordinary fire which should fall from Heaven and consume

tume them, as it did *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and *Aarons* Sons, *Levit.* 10. 2. and *Jobs* Sheep and Servants, *Job* 1. 16. So (say some) God called his Angels to execute judgement on these wicked men, and to contend or plead for him by fire in their destruction.

2 By fire others understand a great Drought, when the violent heat of the Sun-beams should pierce the deepest parts of the earth, below the roots of the Corn and Trees, and so should make a perfect famine. This extream heat and scorching of the Sun is called a Fire, *Joel* 1. 19, 20. *A fire hath consumed the Pastures of the Wilderness, and a flame hath burnt up all the trees of the field*; that is, the great heat of the Sun like to a fire hath consumed all.

3 By Fire may be meant the Wrath of God, which was now inflamed against this stubborn People, and this is the kindler of all Penal fires, and is oft in Scripture called Fire, *Job* 31. 12. *Isa.* 26. 11. *Amos* 5. 6. *Heb.* 12. ult.

4 And most genuinely Fire is here taken Metaphorically for some direful and dreadful Judgement (for Fire of all the Elements is most terrible) which should consume their men, money, health, strength, *Job* 15. 31, 34: More especially, here it adumbrates War, which should be managed by some fiery, furious enemy, who like fire should waite and consume all before it. So *Ezek.* 20. 48. *Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, which shall devour every green tree, and every dry tree*; that is, all sorts of people, both old and young, rich and poor; the fire of War shall consume them all. So *Numb.* 21. 28. *Isa.* 66. 15, 16. *Jer.* 48. 45. *Lam.* 2. 3. *Amos* 1. 4, 7, 10. & 2. 5.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 When lesser Judgements will not mend a People, God usually comes with greater.

The devouring Locusts could not stir this people, God will now see what the Fire will doe. Great impenitency calls for great punishment, *Levit.* 26. 18. But of this elsewhere.

2 Sin is the great make-bate between God and his people.

It breeds contention and dissension between them, God hath a Suit and an Action against such, *Hos.* 4. 1: God had a Con-

See my Com. v

on *Hos.* 13. 16.

*Obf.* 4. p. 68.



trouversie against *Israel*, and cites them to answer the Plea which he had against them for their ignorance, cruelty, swearing, lying, &c. God loves his Creature, as it is his Creature, but when it becomes a sinful, rebellious Creature, he abhors it, and delights in its destruction, *Prov.* 1. 26. This bred the Quarrel between God and the Old world, *Gen.* 6. 2, 3. and between him and *Jerusalem*, *Jer.* 30. 15. *Hos.* 12. 2. *Micha* 6. 2, 3. Sin bred the first Controversie and Quarrel between God and the Angels, and between God and *Adam*. This turns him who is sweetness it self, and mercy it self, into wrath and fury, *Isa.* 64. 5. it is sin that warres against God, and therefore no wonder if he warre against it; it is directly opposite to his holy Nature, *Psal.* 5. 5. and dishonours him in all his Attributes. Sinnefs deny his *Omniscience*, as if he did not see what they doe; and his *Omnipotence*, as if he were unable to punish; and his *Justice*, as if he would never call them to an account, &c. no wonder then if God have a quarrel with such.

See Dr. Goodwins Aggravat. of Sin, on Rom. 7. 13. p. 9. &c.

Sin warres against the *Laws* of God, against the *Spirit* of God, *Isa.* 7. 13. *Ephes.* 4. 30. against the *Saints* of God, against the *wayes and Worship* of God, yea against *all* that is Gods. No wonder then if he contend by *Fire*, against that which so fiercely contends, and fights against him and his.

3 *Warre is a dreadful Judgement.*

See more on A. mos 4. 10.

It is one of Gods last and sore Rods, *Ezek.* 14. 21. hence it is compared here to fire, which is one of the most terrible elements that are. If the Lord should contend with Water, and send a floud upon the world, that were sad, but Fire, Fire is farre more terrible to the nature of man. As *Peace* is one of the choycest Mercies, so War is the saddest Judgement. Peace sweetens our blessings, and makes them blessings indeed. To have Houses, Goods, Lands, and be in continual danger of losing by enemies, imbitters all to us. Hence when the Lord would promise a choyce Mercy, he tells his People that hee will break the Bow and the Sword, and make them to lye down in safety, *Hos.* 2. 18. *Levit.* 26. 5, 6. *Job* 11. 19. *Isa.* 2. 4. & 33. 20. Hence the Psalmist calls upon Gods People to praise him for this mercy of mercies, in making our barres strong, and setting peace in our borders, *Psal.* 147. 12, 13, 14. It is in times of *Peace*, that Fields are tilled, the Gospel spreads,

Verf. 7. of the Prophecy of Amos.

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spreads, Learning increafeth, and the Church is edified, Ezek. 37. 26. *Alt* 9. 31.

[ See more for Peace, *Sibel*. 1 Tom. p. 576, &c. D. *Tuckney*, Good day well improved, Mr. *Harvey* his Olive Branch, D. *Stoughtons* Ser. on Pfal. 144. 15. D. *Tho. Taylors* Ser. fol. on Heb. 12. 14. p. 418. & D. *Gauden* on the fame text. *Church* his Treasury, p. 309. *Barlow* on 2 Tim. 2. 22. p. 160. ]

VERSE 7, 8.

*Thus he fhewed me, and behold, the Lord flood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line, with a Plumb-line in his hand.*

*And the Lord faid unto me, Amos what feefth thou? and I faid a Plumb-line. Then faid the Lord, behold I will fet up a Plumb-line in the midft of my People Ifrael, I will not again pafs by them any more.*

**W**EE are now come to the Third Vifion, wherein the Lord fets forth the utter deftruftion of *Ifrael*, God had born long with their provocations, and waited long for their return, but fince they were incorrigible and incurable, hee refolves now to make a final end with them, and to pafs by and pardon them no more, but to deftroy them by the Sword of *Salmanefer* King of *Affyria*; which is here typified by a *Plumb-line*. Where we have, 1. The Vifion it felf, *verf*. 7. 2. The explication of it, *verf*. 8, 9.

*Thus he fhewed me.*

This is the ufual Preface as before, *verf*. 1, 4.

*And behold, the Lord flood upon a wall made by a Plumb-line*, *Gnal ebomax* or on the wall of a Plumb-line (it is an ufual Hebraifm) that *anach, fuper* is, the Lord flood on a perpendicular wall, fuch a one as was *muyim perpen-* curioufly made, and exactly squared by the Plummer. *diculi.*

The word *Anach* which fignifies a Plumb-line, is variously rendred.

1 Some call it a *Mafons Truel* (fo the vulgar Latin) with *trulla camen-* which they build and parget walls, for ftrength and elegancy; *carth.* fo God had been the ftrength and glory of *Ifrael*.

2 The Septuagint, the Syriack, and the Arabick render it thus, I saw the Lord standing on an *Adamantine wall*, with an Adamant Stone in his hand; implying that God had been the firme defender of his people, and a wall of Adamant to them which no Hammer could break. Both these are truthe, but they have no foundation in the text.

3 The word *Anach* (which is used only in this text) genuinely signifies a *Plumb-line*, which Mafons and Carpenters use for the keeping of their work straight and even. Thus *Zerubbabel* when he was to build the Temple, is said to have a Plummer, or Tin-stone in his hand, that is a Measuring-line, to which a weight of Tin, Stone, or Lead was tied, *Zach. 4. 10.* hence it is called Lead, Metonymically, because a Plummer of Lead is usually tied to a Cord, or lines end to keep it straight. We read of a double use of the Plummer in Scripture :

- 1 For Building, and Rearing.
- 2 For Ruining, and Demolishing.

1 The Plummer is used in building, to make the Work proportionable to the Model; thus Metaphorically God himself is said to work by Rule and Line, *Job 38. 5. Isa. 44. 13. Jer. 31. 39. Ezek. 47. 3. Zach. 10. 16, 21.* by this the Mason and the Carpenter try the rectitude of the Structure, and what upon trial he findes to be right and regular, that he preserves; and what is irregular and exorbitant, inclining either too much to the right hand, or to the left, that he pulls down.

2 The Plummer is used in levelling and demolishing, When the Mason layes the Line to the Work, and findes upon trial any place to swell and belch out, that he demolisheth and pulls down; thus when the Lord threatned to ruine *Edoms Country*, he tells us, *That he will stretch upon it the line of confusion; and the stone of emptiness, Isa. 34. 11.* that is, the Lord will measure it out for utter destruction, and perpetual ruine, so that it shall never be built, or be inhabited more. The like expression we find, *Isa. 28. 17. Lam. 2. 8.* and especially in the 2 *King. 27. 13.* where the Lord threatening to destroy *Jerusalem*, tells them, *That he will stretch over Jerusalem the Line of Samaria, and the Plummer of the house of Ahab;* that is,

is, I will deal with *Jerusalem* as I have dealt with *Samaria*, and with the house of *Manasseh* as with the house of *Ahab*; as I destroyed those for their sins, so will I destroy these. Thus the Lord stood upon the Wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, as ready to execute his just and righteous judgements upon *Israel*. This is an Embleme of Gods Mercy and Justice, who is the Master-builder of his Church.

1 It denotes his *Mercy*, in that he made this Church right and firme like a perpendicular wall, made exactly by Line and Rule, he had curiously built it, and as carefully defended it.

2 It is an Embleme of his *Justice*, he stands upon the wall of his Church, continually trying and examining whether it continue right or not, bearing with its defects, untill like a wall quite bending and belching out, it can no more be mended, or set upright as it was at the first, for then he resolves to throw down all, *Isa. 30. 13.*

This wall (by some) is made a Type of all the people of *Israel*, whom the Lord of old had built for a peculiar people to himself. These resembled a wall. For,

1 *Walls* cannot raise themselves, but are built by some skilful Architect; so this people of *Israel* did not raise themselves, but God of his owne free love and grace chose them for his owne peculiar, and exalted them above all the Nations of the world.

2 *Walls* have foundations; and so had this people many gracious Promises to build upon, which the Lord made to *Abraham* and his Seed, which they contemning came to ruine.

3 An Architect builds the walls by Line and Rule; so God did all for this People with the greatest judgement and exactnesse imaginable. They had all of the best, the best Church, the best Sate, the best Lawes, the best Rulers, and the most successful Judges and Kings. The Lord himself was for walls and bulwarks to them, he was Salvation round about them, and their glory in the midst of them; so great was his care and tenderneffe over them, *Isa. 26. 1. & 60. 18. Zach. 2. 5.* But since neither Mercies nor Judgements could mend them, the Lord resolves to forbear them no longer, but as he had built them up in mercy, so now he would ruine them in justice, and punish them exactly according to their demerits.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Though the Lord bear long with the Sins of a People, yet he will not always bear.*

Though the Prayers of his People may keep off Judgements for a time, yet the Sins of a People may be so great, that the Lord will hear no more prayers for them, *Jer. 15. 1. Ezek. 14. 16, 18, 20.* and therefore the Prophet here seeing this People were incurable, and Gods determination fully set to destroy them for their Idolatry and Apostacy, he forbears any further interceding for them, quietly acquiescing in the righteous Judgements of God upon them. There is a time when the Lord will shew a People no more favour, *Jer. 16. 13.* an evil day, an only and extreme evil day, in which the Lord forbids Prayer, *Jer. 7. 11, 14.* and restrains a spirit of prayer, and relenting from his people, *Ezek. 24. 23. Dan. 9. 13.*

2 *Gods Judgements upon wicked men are just and righteous.*

They are all exactly framed as it were by line and measure, *Dan. 5. 27.* Justice is essential to God, he may as soon cease to be God, as cease to be just; hence he is called, *the righteous Judge*, *Gen. 18. 25.* and *the just Lord, who will do no iniquity*, *Zeph. 3. 5.* he is just in and of himself, and just in his Lawes, just in his Decrees, just in the execution of those Decrees, just in the Government of the World, just in his Rewards; and just in his Judgements; he is not only righteous in some, but in all his wayes, *Psal. 145. 17.*

Do not then fret or murmur at his Dispensations towards thee or thine, his Judgements may be secret, but they are always just; whatever therefore God doth to thee or thine, yet say with *David*, *Righteous is the Lord, and just are his Judgements*, *Psa. 119. 117.* and with *Hezekiah*, when he was told that he must lose all, *Good is the Word of the Lord which thou hast spoken*, *Isa. 39. 8.*

We should then *imitate God*, as he is just and righteous in all his wayes, so should we be also in our degree; doing all exactly, according to the square and rule of Gods Word. As we must be merciful, as our heavenly Father is merciful; so we must be just, as he is just; though we cannot be so by way of Equality, yet by way of Analogy and Similitude we must be

so.

so. Let us be just in our rewards, just in our punishments, just in our weights, words, and works, &c. that so God may delight in us; for the righteous Lord loveth righteousness, *Psalms* 11. 7.

## VERSE 8.

*And the Lord said unto me, Amos what seeest thou? and I said, a Plumb-line. Then said the Lord, behold I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel, I will not again pass by them any more.*

THE Lord comes now to threaten not a punishment, (as formerly) - but a total destruction of this impenitent People; and therefore this Vision is not barely propounded, but by a Dialogue is so clearly expounded, that he who runs may read it. The better to quicken both Prophet and People to attention, the Lord begins with a question, *Amos what seeest thou?* The Prophet could more easily discern the meaning of the two former Visions, viz. that of the Locusts, and of the Fire; but God standing upon a wall with a Plumb-line in his hand, was harder to understand, and therefore the Lord goes on to explain it to the Prophet.

*I will set a Plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel;* that is, I will now actually execute my Justice on them, which I have hitherto suspended in passing by their misdeeds; as I have formerly built them up by Line and Level, so will I now make an utter destruction of them, and will lay them in the dust. I have examined their works and ways by the Rule and square of my Word, and I find them so exceeding irregular, that I can no longer forbear them, *neither will I pass by them, or pardon them any more.* This latter clause is exegetical, and expounds the former; I have spared them twice already, but now I will make a final end with them; I will spend no more admonitions or corrections in vaine upon them, but I will deal with them as men use to doe with ruinous houses, whose breaches grow wider and worse every day than other, they pull them down, and lay them in the dust.



*La oliph gnad  
gnabor lo; non  
adjuicium ultra  
praterire eum.*

*I will not again passe by them any more.*

See Amos 8. 2.

That is, I will shew them no more mercy, I will pardon them no longer; I have long winkt at their Sins, and let them goe unpunisht; but I will doe so no longer, I will surely and severely punish them for all together, as it follows in the next verse. The like expression we have, *Amos 8. 2. & Prov. 19. 11. It is the glory of a man to passe by an offence*; that is, to spare a man that hath offended, and not to punish him, or take revenge on him. So *Micah 7. 18.*

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Our rising and our ruining comes from God.*

He builds us by Rule, and if we swerve from the Rule, he will set up the Plumb-line and ruine us by Rule. All our times both of rising and falling are in Gods hands, *Psal. 31. 15.* our adversity and prosperity is not casual, but providential. As the Lord gives, so it is he that takes roe, *Job 1. 21.* it is he that sent the Locusts and the Fire, and now the Plumb-line of utter destruction upon this people.

2 *Gods Judgements usually are gradual.*

As mens sins are gradual, and rise to their *maximum quod sic*, to the highest ascent by degrees, so doe Gods Judgements. The judgement of the Locusts was sad, that of Fire was worse, but now comes the fatal Plumb-line and ends them. God doth not presently punish men so soon as ever they sin, but his patience waits, and allots men space to repent, *Rom. 2. 4, 5. & Revel. 2. 21.* which they abusing, God at last reckons with Sinners for all together; as we see in the *Amorites*, the old World, *Sodom*, and *Jerusalem*.

### VERSE 9.

*And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the Sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid wast; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the word.*

**V**EE have in this Verse a fuller explication of the Vision of the Plumb-line, and what it typified, viz. a total

a total subversion both of the Ecclesiastical and Civil state of *Israel*.

They were wont to boast much of their fore-fathers: when our Saviour talked with the Woman of *Samarita*, she presently tells him, *Our Fathers worship in this Mountain*, John 4. 20. so here, our fore-fathers worship in *Betbel*, *Beerseba*, *Gilgal*, &c. and therefore they conclude that they must needs please God by following their examples. Thus they flattered themselves as the Papists doe at this day, preferring the fallible Fathers before the infallible Word of God. But the Prophet plainly tells them, that the high places of *Isaac* (where they committed their Idolatry) should be desolate. By *Isaac* here is meant the house of *Israel*, who were descended from *Isaac* and *Jacob*. So *Vers. 16.* the Septuagint, the Syriac, and the Arabick Versions, make the word *Isaac* an Appellation, and not a proper name; they render it, Laughter, or Joy; the High places of Laughter, or the ridiculous High places, and the Altars of Derision (for what is more ridiculous than for men to worship a Stock, or a Stone which themselves have carved?) shall be desolate. But this is a ridiculous version of this text, for though there be a change of one Letter in the name of *Isaac*, *Scin* instead of *Tsade*, yet the Learned in that Language observe, that these Letters are used promiscuously, the one for the other, and it is the same *Isaac* here spoken of, which is mentioned, *Gen. 17. 19. & Psal. 105. 9.*

*Ara risus, vel  
sana ridicula.*

*Bamat Isaac, i. e.  
excelsa Isaac,  
it is not excelsa  
Idols, as the  
Vulg.*

By high places here, are meant Temples and Altars, erected on Mountains and Hills for the honour of their Idols, *Amos 4. ult.* Though God had confined them by a strict command to worship at *Jerusalem*, yet they must have somewhat of their owne inventing, they must be sacrificing on their owne high Hills, high Altars, and high Places, though they dye for it.

*What these  
High places  
were, see Mr.  
Greenhil on E-  
zek. 6. 3. f. 457.*

These are called the High-places of *Isaac*, say some; 1 Because as *Abraham* was ready to offer *Isaac* in Sacrifice at Gods command; so these offered their Sons and Daughters (in imitation of *Abraham*) to *Moloch*, and *Baal*, but there is no ground for this in the text.

2 They garnisht their Idolatry with the names and examples of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, because in their times they had set up secret Altars, and offered Sacrifices there to the God of

Heaven. Thus did *Isaac* at *Beersheba*, Gen. 26. 25. and *Jacob* at *Bethel*, Gen. 35. 7.

*And the Sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid wast.*

That is, the Idolatrous Temples, Altars, and Groves in *Dan* and *Bethel*, and other Cities, consecrated to the golden Calves shall be destroyed by the *Assyrian*.

*Mied: she, sanctuaria.*

These places are called *Sanctuaries*, and Holy places ( not that they are so indeed ) but the Scripture speaks according to mens opinions of them, as here it calls these Idols Temples, Sanctuaries, when indeed they were dens of Devils, and great provocations of Gods wrath against this people.

*And I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the Sword.*

This *Jeroboam* was not *Jeroboam* the Son of *Nebat* which made *Israel* to sin, the first Author of Schism and Idolatry in the Kingdome of *Israel*; but this is *Jeroboam* the second, one of the same name, and of the same religion, a chip of the old block, he was Son to *Joash*, Nephew to *Jehu*, and Father to *Zachariah*; in his dayes the Kingdom flourisht, they recovered many Cities, and enlarged their borders, but they abusing these Mercies, God threatens to destroy both the Kingdome and the Kings posterity; as he did when *Zachariah* the Son of *Jeroboam* was slaine openly in the sight of the people, by *Shallum* ( after he had reigned six moneths ) who translated the Kingdome to his owne family, 2 *King*. 15. 10. and this put an end to *Jehu's* Stock, according to the threatening, 2 *King*. 10. 30. Two vaine props this People rested on. 1. In their external, Idolatrous services, 2. In the power of their Kings. Both these the Lord tells them should faile them; for their Sanctuaries should be laid wast, and the house of the King cut off, and this made way for their utter ruine by the *Assyrian*.

*Q. But why doth the Lord threaten the house of Jeroboam rather than any other family?*

*A.* Because the Leaders of People ( especially if they be wicked ) lead them into Sin with themselves, and so have the Peoples sins to answer for, as well as their owne. The twenty Kings

Kings of *Israel* were all of them Idolaters, and drew the people into Idolatry with them, and therefore the Lord threatens to begin with the house of *Jeroboam* first; both Princes, Priests, and People had sinned together, and now the Lord tells them they shall perish together. So *Samuel* told the people, that if they persevered in their wickedness, both they and their King should perish, 1 *Sam.* 12. ult.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Corruptions in the Church usually ruine the State.

For Church and Common-wealth are like the Vine and the Elme, or like those twins which are said to weep and laugh together; so long as purity in religion is preserved, the State prospers, and hath peace, 2 *Chron.* 17. 5, 10. *Isa.* 60. 12, 13, 18. God will preserve that people which preserves his truth, *Revel.* 2. 10. but he will depart from those that depart from the purity of his wayes; and when God departs, peace, plenty, comfort, glory, &c. all goes with him, and all misery comes in like a flood, *Deut.* 31. 17. *Jer.* 6. 8. *Hos.* 9. 12.

2 God will destroy Idolatrous places.

The Sanctuaries and high places of Idolators shall be ruined; if Magistrates will not destroy them, God will, *Levit.* 26. 30. *Deut.* 12. 23. *Ezek.* 6. 3. *Amos* 4. ult. & 5. 5. See more in Mr. Greenhill,

3 Sin, (especially the Sin of Idolatry) ruines great men as well as others. *Ezek.* 6. 3. Obf. 2.

God is no respecter of persons, but if great men be great offenders, they must look for great punishment. God is terrible not only to inferiour wicked men, but even to the Kings of the earth; if *Jeroboam* will worship golden Calves, those Calves shall be his ruine. Idolatry is a God-provoking, and a Land-destroying sin, *Psal.* 106. 29. *Amos* 2. 4, 5.

4 Gods Ministers must denounce Judgements against great men when they sin, as well as against inferiour persons.

Magnum hoc est zeli Propheticum argumentum, quod Jeroboam regem, potentiam regis & victorias illustrem, Amos

Yea, rather against them, because by their example they doe more hurt. This makes *Amos* as it were threaten the house of the King. Thus *Elijah* reproves *Ahab*, *Nathan*, *David*, and *John Baptist Herod*. [ See more in my Com. on *Psal.* 82. 2. Obf. 1. p. 96, 97.

5 God transferres Kingdoms from one family to another, as diserte nominat: plegeth him.

D d d 3

He Gualter.

He pulls down one and sets up another in the Throne, and none may say to him, what dost thou? After the division of the Kingdom of *Israel* from *Judah*, they had twenty Kings of ten several Stocks, whereof one destroyed another. *Jeroboam's* Stock was cut off by *Baasha*, and *Baasha's* by *Zimri*, and *Tibni* by *Omri*, and *Omri's* by *Jehu*, and *Jehu's* by *Shallum*, and *Shallum's* by *Menabems*, and *Menabems* by *Pekah*, and *Pekah's* by *Hoshea*. All these Kings were Idolaters, and the most of them cruel Tyrants, and Persecutors; and therefore God cut them off, that they did not live out half their days.

## VER. 10, 11.

*Then Amaziah the Priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam King of Israel, saying, Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel, the Land is not able to bear all his words.*

*For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall dye by the Sword, and Israel shall surely be led away Captive out of their owne Land.*

**W**EE have seen *Amos* his fidelity and love to this People, in the faithful discharge of his duty to them. We are now come to the issue and event of his Sermons, and to see how he is requited for his pains, and this makes the second part of this Chapter, where we have a notable History of the Persecution and treachery of *Amaziah* the Idolatrous Priest of *Bethel*; and the constancy of *Amos* in asserting the truth, maugre the malice of all adverse power whatsoever.

This prophane Priest being nettled with the plaine and powerful preaching of *Amos* at *Bethel*, fearing lest the people should see the truth, and be wrought upon by *Amos* his Sermons to cast away their Idols, and return to the Worship of God at *Jerusalem*, and so his gaines which he had by the Sacrifices and Oblations at *Bethel* might be lost; yea if *Amos* and his Party should prevail, he might fear not only the loss of his Priesthood and authority, but the loss of his life also, as a false Prophet; he therefore resolves to doe all he can, both  
by

by force and fraud to rid the Land of this turbulent and seditious *Amos*. The Urchin (we say) hath but one shirt, but the Fox hath many; and so hath *Amaziah* here.

1 He gets on the *Lions skin*, and accuseth *Amos* to the King for a trayterous Conspirator against him, and a seditious Disturber of the peace of the Kingdom: Thus he pretends great kindnesse to the King, and tells him the cause was his, when in truth self was in the bottom of the design; for he knew if *Amos* prevailed, he should lose his fat morsels at *Bethel*, both he and his Idols might starve together; *Jerusalem* would have all the custom from him.

2 Since this way did not take, he now gets on the *Foxes skin*, and as a seeming friend, counsels him to leave the Kingdom of *Israel*, and goe to *Judea*, his owne Country, and Prophecy there, where he might avoyd the Kings fury. q. d. *It is not safe for thee, O Amos, to Prophecy here against the King and Kingdom, but goe to Judea, and tell them of the downfall of Israel, there thou wilt be safe and welcome; but this is Bethel, and it is no discretion for thee to preach against the King and Kingdom here.*

To this Charge and crafty counsel of *Amaziah*, *Amos* pioussly, prudently, and peaceably answers, with much courage and constancy, *Vers. 14, 15.* proving his extraordinary call to the work, denouncing Gods Judgements against *Amaziah*, and *Israel*, *vers. 16, 17.*

In this Verse we have an Accusation, or Charge drawn up against *Amos*, where we have, 1. The Party accusing, and that is *Amaziah* the Idolatrous Priest of *Bethel*, so called to distinguish him from *Amaziah* King of *Judah*, 2 *King. 12. ult.* he was Successor to those Idolatrous Priests which *Jeroboam* had set up at *Bethel*; some great man he was at Court in all probability, and neer to the King, which made him send so boldly to him, to incense him against *Amos*; the Jesuit calls *Amazias* fuit him the High Priest of the Idols at *Bethel*, there *Jeroboam* had Pontifex Idolorum, i. e. vitulorum aureorum in *Betheli*. placed a Colledge of Priests, 1 *King 12. 33.* *Amaziah* might be the Praefect, or Governour of it.

The word *Chohen*, is used promiscuously for a Priest or a *Lapide*. Fuit illius loci praefectus regius. *Tarpovius*. Cum sacerdotem nominat, non vulgarem neque infimum videtur intelligere, sed inter alios insignem, velut sacrificiorum *Bethel* principem. *Barneus*.



See Mr. Caryl

On Job 12. 19. Gen. 41. 45. & 47. 22.

Prince, for an Ecclesiastical or a Civil Governor. In those days (except it were in *Judea*) many persons were both Priests and Princes, and ruled in Church and State. Hence the word is used for a Counsellor of State, or a great man, *Job* 12. 19 for a Priest, *Leviticus* 1. 12. and for Idolatrous Priests, as here, and

2 Here is the *Party accused*, and that is *Amos*, a poor, plaine, pious, harmles Prophet.

3 Here is the Person to whom he is accused, and that is the King, *Amaziah sent to the King*, he could not well suppress him himself, and therefore he sends to the Secular Power for ayd, desiring he may be either silenced, or banisht, or put to death.

4 Here is the *Matter* for which he is accused, viz. for Sedition, Rebellion, Conspiracy, and Treason; this he speaks to exasperate the King against him: the good Prophet did only discharge his duty faithfully, and perform that office which God had called him to, yet this is called *Sedition*, and conspiracy.

5 He aggravates the Crime from the *Place* where all this treason was acted, and that was not privily in a corner, or in another Kingdom, but openly in thy Kingdom, and in the midst of thy people *Israel*, even at *Bethel*, where was the Court and greatest confluence of all the subjects; so that thou hadst best look to it, O King, for intestine commotions are very dangerous.

6 Here is the Peoples ill resentment of all this, *The Land is not able to bear all his words*. *Amos* signifies a grievous burden, and he had not his name for nought, for he came loaded with many sad burdens and comminations against *Israel*, which made this stubborn people so unable to bear his words, *q. d.* Such a seditious, dangerous fellow is this New-found *Amos*, that if thou, O King, doe not suppress him, the people will; for *the Land*, that is, the people of the Land cannot brook, nor bear his blunt and down-right preaching, for they hate him that reproves them in the Gate, and abhor him that speaks uprightly, *Amos* 5. 10. Thus they complaine of *Amos* (without a cause) for conspiring against the King, when themselves conspired and combined together against the King of Kings without controul.

*The Land cannot bear his words*, much less can I, or any one that is devoted to the service of the King. His Prophecies are intolerable, for he disheartens the people by making them despair of their owne safety, so that he is no longer to be endured, O King, by thee, or thine, for the Land will never be quiet till it be rid of him, either by banishment or death; there will be nothing but tumults and factions so long as he is tolerated to seduce the people.

Thus we see how this malicious false Prophet sayes on load, thinking that somewhat would stick; every word hath its weight, *Quot verba, tot verbera*, so many words, so many daggers to stab this good Prophet. Had the charge been true, as it was notoriously false, *Amos* had been a man of death indeed.

To clear up all, let us look into the Charge more exactly.

*Then Amaziah Priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam King of Israel.*

*Then*, when the Prophet had made known to the people the Visions of God, concerning the ruine of the Kings house, and of the Kingdome, then *Amaziah* the Priest can hold no longer, but he must persecute and prosecute the Prophet. Thus persecution ever attends the faithful dispensing of the truth; flattery (we say) findes friends, but truth hatred.

*He sent to King Jeroboam*; that is, he sent Letters or Messengers to the King, to incense him against *Amos*, and that clancularly and unknown to *Amos*, that so he might be condemned, unheard. No doubt but this High Priest had his Spies and Intelligencers about him, to observe what *Amos* preached, and now having got matter enough (as he conceived) against him, to root him out, he spit his poyson, saying, *Amos hath conspired against thee*.

The word which we render to conspire, properly signifies *Kas har, ligavit*, to bind, or to be compactly bound together in a body; but Metaphorically it signifies to conspire, to rebel, to conjure and band together against one, so the word is used, *1 Samu. 22. 8, 13. 1 King. 15. 27. & 16. 9. & 2 King. 10. 9. & 21. 23.* so that this conspiring implies that *Amos* had some confederates with him, that helped to carry on this conspiracy against the King; when alas, *Amos* was so farre from conspiring, that he was now considering how he might prevent the ruine both of

King and Kingdom, and avert the approaching judgements. By his Prayers he had prevented two judgements, and now counsels them to prevent the third; yet *Amos* is a Conspirator and troubler of *Israel*, when it was their owne Idolatry and Apostacy, and not *Amos*, that troubled them.

2 *Amos* did not vent his Passion, or speak his owne private opinion; but he tells them the mind and Message of God which he had shewed him in a Vision, and commanded him, to publish, touching the destruction (not of the King himself, for we read not that *Jeroboam* dyed by the sword) but of the Kings Posterity, vers. 9. *I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.* But *Amaziah* conceiving that the King would be more enraged against *Amos* for Prophecying against him, than for Prophecying against his Children, thereupon forgets this accusation, and saith, *Amos* hath conspired against thee, and hath said, the King shall dye by the Sword, Not a word of truth, for *Amos* did not conspire against the King, neither did he say that he should dye by the Sword, yet this hath been the lot of all Gods faithfull Ministers, to be counted Seditious, and the troublers of a State, solely for discharging the duty of their places faithfully.

*Amos non in Regem, sed in Amazia mendacia, & abominaciones rebellavit, Mer- ser.*

Now by this high Charge we may see, that this false Prophet sought the life of the true one, as will appear if we frame his Accusation into an Argument, thus,

He that hath conspired the ruine both of King and Kingdom ought to dye; But *Amos* hath done so. *Ergo.* But it pleased the Lord (in whose hand is the heart of the King) to make the King so farre to favour the Prophet, as that hee sleighted this Priests accusation, and therefore *Amaziah* pretends friendship to this Prophet, as we shall see hereafter.

A great man counselled B. Latimer when he came first to Court, that he should in no wise contradict the King, but let him have his sayings, follow him, go with him. Latimer Ser. 7. p. 83. b.

Now let us view the Transactions of this High-Priest, and we shall finde a compleat Character of a false Prophet, or the perfect picture of a Politician.

1 They use to flatter and delude great ones, making them to beleieve that none are their friends but such as say as they say, and doe whatever they would have them doe, and humour them in their sins; and that they are their foes that like *Amos* here, deal faithfully and plainly with them, and this is no small part of great mens misery, that they have few about them that dare, or will deal faithfully with them. They may use

use the Letany (in this sense) with that alteration which the poor Curate used, when he saw his Lord come into the Church, *O God the Father of Heaven have mercy upon us Right Honourable Sinners.* Their state (in this respect) is farre worse than that of inferiour persons, who are plainly and truly told of their sins, when these are soothed up to their destruction.

2 They calumniare and belye the true Prophets, they observe *Machiavels* rule, *Calumniare audacter, saltem aliquid adharebis*, Lye lustily, somewhat will stick though it be never so false. So it was with *Amos* here.

3 They labour with might and maine to suppress and silence the true Prophets, they know that their Kingdom cannot long stand, if once the faithful Ministers of Christ bee countenanced, Light and Darknes, the Ark and Dagon, Christ and Belial can never subsist together. This made *Amaziah* here to use both force and fraud to rid the Land of *Amos*.

See Mr. Baxter,  
Fools prosperi-  
ty, p. 293, &c.

*diffima non possit stare mendacium, ne momento quidem.* Mercer in locum.

4 They labour to suppress good men before they can be heard. They must not speak, nor dispute the case. Thus *Amaziah* here clancularly accuseth *Amos* to the King, when he could make no defence for himself.

5 They usually mingle some truth with their lyes; As Fowlers doe mixe some Wheat with their Chaff, to catch the Birds the sooner. So did *Amaziah* here, he mixed some truth with his lyes. *Amos* hath said, *Jeroboam* shall dye by the Sword, [that was false] and *Israel* shall surely goe into Captivity, [that was true.]

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 In all ages there have been false Prophets to oppose the true.

There was a *Jannes* and a *Jambres* to resist *Moses*, 2 Tim. 3. 8. and four hundred false Prophets against one good *Micah*; a *Pashur* and an *Hananiah* against the Prophet *Jeremy*; and here *Amaziah* against *Amos*. So in the New Testament, how bitter were the High Priests against Christ, *Joh. 11. 47, 48.* accusing him as an enemy to the State, and

See more in my  
Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 8.  
Obf. 1.

no friend to *Casur*. How did the Scribes and Pharisees oppose the Apostles, and since Antichrists Kingdom hath been set up, how have Gods faithful witnesses been persecuted and slaine? Persecution hath ever been the lot, especially of Gods zealous Messengers, *Alis* 7. 51. let a man faithfully discharge the duties of his place, and then let him look for some Idolatrous *Amaziah* to oppose him. When we have opportunities of doing any good, we must look for many adversaries, *1 Cor.* 16. 9. Let us not then be offended, when we meet with the like usage from the world.

*Ne offendimur,  
si hodie etiam  
summi; Pontifi-  
ces, Cardinales;*

*Episcopi, &c. Evangelicæ doctrinæ præ aliis reluctantur. Gualter.*

2 It is the property of Persecutors to undermine Gods Servants clancularly.

*Amaziah* sends to the King privily, unknown to *Amos*, and accuseth him for a Traytor, that so he might be condemned without hearing, or answering for himself. Thus they deal with *Jeremy*, when they could finde nothing justly against him, then they secretly devise devices against him, *Jer.* 11. 19. & 13. 6. & 18. 18. where we may observe the vile ingratitude of men; this Prophet had by his Prayers averted two Judgements from *Israel*, yet now they seek his death, who saved their life; and accuse him of Rebellion, who saved them from destruction.

Valiant men charge their adversaries in the face, it is for Cowards to creep behind. Truth seeks no shifts nor corners, it loves the light, as true gold fears neither the Touch-stone, nor the ballance; but falshood being a work of darknesse, loves darknesse, and is not able to stand bare-faced before truth; and therefore it makes lyes and falshood its refuge.

3 Wicked men what ever they pretend, yet intend Self.

*Haman* pretended the Kings profit, when his owne ambition, envie, and revenge was that he really sought, *Hest.* 3. 8. So this Idolatrous Priest here pretended great love and service to the King, when Self was in the bottom of the design. Hee was the Priest of *Bethel*, and got much profit by the place, and therefore he hated *Amos* heartily, who forbad the people to

*Curabit Ama-  
zias proprium  
commodum,  
sicut hodie vi-  
demus Cardina-  
les & cornu-  
tos Episcopos,  
qui Principum aulos occupant, non preferre quod habent in animo; vident enim non posse stare  
suam tyrannidem nisi aboleatur Evangelium. Vident doctrinam nostram minari frigus, vel po-  
tius glaciem suis colonis, deinde vident se nullos fore in mundo nisi nos oppresserint. Calvinus  
locum.*

come

come any more at *Bethel*, but to shun it as a place infected with Superstition and Idolatry, *Amos 5. 5.* and so all the far of this self-seeking Priest of *Bethel* ran into the fire. This he could not bear, for it struck at his dignity and livelihood. Such men make their bellies their gods, and little regard what becomes of truth, *modo hic sit bene*, (as the Monk said) when he stroked his fat paunch. Wee read of low and ordinary Priests that were obedient to the faith, *Acts 6. 7.* when the High-ones were enemies to the Gospel. The Apostle complains that all men seek their owne ease, profit, praise, but few or none seek the things of Jesus Christ, *Phil. 2. 21.* How many plead for the Papacy and Prelacy for their bellies sake, rather than out of conviction, or in good earnest.

See an acute Ser. of Mr. Edw. Symonds, on *Phil. 2. 21.* printed 1642.

4 It is an old trick of Satan and his agents, falsely to accuse the servants of God of Sedition, Treason, and Rebellion.

*Amos* that was the glory and Saviour of *Israel*, that by his Prayers kept off many Judgements from them, yet now is called, the Troubler of *Israel*, and commanded to pack out of the Land, which he not halting to doe, he was knockt in the head with a Club by *Amaziah* his Son, as *Epiphanius*, *Jerom* and others affirm. Thus *Elijah*, who was called, the Champions and Horsemen of *Israel*, is called by wicked *Ahab* the Troubler of *Israel*, *1 King. 18. 17, 18.* *Haman* accused the *Jews* for a People that kept not the Kings Lawes, and that it was not for his profit to suffer them to live in the Land, *Hest. 3. 8.* Thus *Jeremy* that wept in secret for the sins of the Land, and by his Prayers did keep off many Judgements, yet is called a man of contention, and one that weakened the hearts and hands of the People, and that sided with the *Chaldeans* against his owne Country-men, *Jer. 15. 10. & 37. 13, 14, 15, 18. & 38. 4.* *Moses* one of the meekest men in the world, yet is accused of ambition, and one that takes too much upon him, *Numb. 16.*

See Bu roughs Moses Choyce, cha. 1. p. 17. Solenne est ut Christianis crimina Seditio- nis, & laesæ Majestatis à persecutoribus assignantur, quibus tamen non sint obnoxii. Centur. Mag. deb. 2 Col. 420.

Yea Christ himself was called and counted an enemy to *Cæsar*, a Fanatick, a Mad-man. and one that had a Devil. The Apostles were counted troublers of the Land, and the Pests of the places where they came, walking contrary to the Decrees

Obtendunt nostram Doctrinam non posse recipi quin totus orbis muretur, quia totus ordo politicus pereat, quin reges spoliarentur sua potentia, conciliant sibi favorem his obliquis artibus. Calvin in locum.



S.

See *Latimers*  
 1er. p. 43. b. p.  
 71. b. p. 106. b.  
 Edit. ult.

of *Caesar*, and setting the world on a flame, *Acts* 16. 20, 21. & 17. 6, 7. So *Paul* was counted a pestilent incendiary, *Acts* 21. 28, 30, 31. & 24. 5. and *B. Latimer* in his Sermons often tells us, that when his enemies could finde no just exceptions against his matter, yet they would accuse him for a Seditious and turbulent fellow. Truly (saith he) the Preaching of Gods Word is the cause of Sedition and Rebellion, as *Tonterton-Steeple* was the cause that *Sandwich-Haven* was stopt up with *Goodwins Sands*.

The Devil began his Kingdom with a Lye, and by Lyes he still upholds it; he was a Lyar and a Murderer from the beginning, but first a Lyar, and then a Murderer; he cannot handsomely murder untill he slander first; hee must put a Bear-skin upon our backs before he can wel bait us. So they did in the *Primitive times*, and if any calamity befel the Land, they presently cried, *Away with the Christians to the Lions*, as if they had been the cause of it; whereas the world was full of miseries before they were born, and will be when they are dead and gone. The Pagans in those times gave out, that the Christians did worship an Asses Head, used promiscuous Lusts, and drunk the blood of Infants, &c. These and many more Slanders they invented, meerly to make them odious, that they might murder them the better. As a man that will hang his Neighbours Dogge, must first give out that he is mad. This made so many Learned men to Apologize for the Christians, and to wipe off those calumnies which malice had cast upon them. Thus did *Justin Martyr*, *Apolog. ad Sanct. Romanum*, p. 41. edit. *Gracolat.* & 2 *Apolog. ad Anton. Pinnu*, p. 53. *Tertullian Apolog.* *Minutius Felix*, p. 102. 116, &c. & *Origen Lib. 3. contra Celsum*, Tom. 3. p. 681. *Cyprian contra Demetrianum*, p. 163. *Arnobius lib. 1. adversus gentes. August de Civit. Dei per totum*. He writ those twenty two Books to clear the Christian Religion from vile aspersions.

The wicked like *Athaliah* cry Treason, Treason, when shee her self was the Traytor. The wicked complaine of the godly for troubling *Israel*, when it is themselves that are the true Reshagnims and troublers both of Church and State. As they have no peace in themselves, so they hinder it in others. It is the coverous *Achan*, the Idolater, *Judg.* 5. 8. the Swearer, *Jer.* 23. 10. the Sabbath-prophaner, *Ezek.* 20. 13. the Covenant-breaker,

*Si Tiberis non ascendit ad mœnia, Si Nilus non ascendit in arva, statim Christianos ad leones. Tertul. Apo'og. c. 40. Aug. de Civit. Dei. l. 2. c. 3. See Mr. Bolton, Comfort assist. Conscience, Part 1. ch. 2. Sect. 2. p. 155, 156. & D. Saude for his Second Ser. Ad clerum, p. 56, &c.*

nant-breaker, *Levit. 26. 23.* the debaucht Drunkard, the unclean *Zimri* and *Cozbi*, these, these are they that trouble *Israel*.

Touching the turbulency of *Jesuits* and Mass-priests, and King *James* what Incendiaries they are, and touching their seditious Do-<sup>calls them the</sup>ctrine, leading to disobedience and rebellion, what a Cata-<sup>Devils Brood,</sup>logue of about forty Kings and Princes destroyed, or <sup>ubi canis, fe-</sup>ruined by the Pope and his Clergy, see this clearly proved by <sup>or suita, ibi est re-</sup>Mr. *John White*, in his *Way to the true Church*, chap. 6. p. 25. <sup>gum proditor,</sup> and Mr. *Baxter*, his *Key to Catholicks*, chap. 48. p. 348. & <sup>scelerum machi-</sup>356. See *Watsons Quodlibets*, p. 69, &c. 75, &c. 112, &c. Dr. *Abbot Antilogia*, p. 1. p. 36. p. 115. they teach King-killing, *Bolton Comfort Afflict. Consc.* Preface, p. 3, 4, 5. D. *Morton, De potest. Regia*, S. 3. and Mr. *Pryn*, *The Treachery and Disloyalty of Papists to their Sovereigns*, printed 1643. and *Romes* Master-peece. Yet to come nearer our times, what notorious Slanders and Lyes have the Papists raised against our Reformers? to instance but in three:

*Luther,*  
*Calvin,*  
*Beza.*

1 *Luther* was loaded with Papistical Lyes, he was accustomed to them, saying, *Mibi maxime pro sunt, qui de me pessime loquuntur, Lutherus pascitur convitiis.* See *Whites* way to the true Church. Di-<sup>See Whites way</sup>going merry to bed and drunk, he was found next morning <sup>gref. 54. p. 429,</sup>dead in his bed, &c. when *Luther* was alive, and testified the <sup>&c. and Mr.</sup>falsehood of this Fiction under his owne hand. The like they <sup>Clark in the life</sup>did by *Calvin*, and *Beza*. <sup>of Luther.</sup>

2 *Calvin*, they were not behind hand with him, they accused him of Ambition, Covetousness, Incontinency, &c. that <sup>See *Rivet*. Ca-</sup>he was a branded *Sodomite*, consumed of Lice, and dyed <sup>thol. Ortho-</sup>blaspheming, all which calumnies are set off by the <sup>dox, Q. 1. p. 12,</sup>Writers <sup>13, 14, &c.</sup>of his life. His enemies finde it farre more easie to calumniate <sup>and Mr. *Baxter*'s</sup>him, than to imitate him. Most of our Modern Writers doe <sup>Key to Catho-</sup>but descant upon *Calvins* Plain-song; yea the *Jesuits* them-<sup>licks, chap. 31.</sup>selves are very Plagiaries, who doe first rob him, and then <sup>p. 189, &c.</sup>rail at him.

3 *Beza*, They gave out that he was dead, and had recanted, and turned Papist, when he was alive, and did confute the slander.

It

It were easie to tire the Reader with such instances, but these may suffice.

This may serve,

1 For Comfort.

2 For Caution.

To comfort us  
against Stan-  
ders. See my  
Com. on 2 Tim.  
3. 3. p. 88.  
See Watson's  
Chap. 15.

1 For *Comfort*, if the like befall us, remember the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord. Let us be patient till the coming of the Lord, for then there will be a Resurrection of Names, as well as of Bodies, and Christ himself will be our Compurgator.

2 For *Caution*, It must make us wary and cautious what reports we receive against the godly; and not to beleieve every Idolatrous bloud-thirsty *Amaziah*, when they revile and caluminate Gods faithful Ministers and People; if bare accusations were sufficient to condemn men, Christ himself had not been innocent.

*Pax cum homi-  
nibus, sed cum  
vitiis conivitis  
& criminis pug-  
nandum est.*

As for the godly, they are of those who are peaceable in *Israel*, they are endued with the wisdom which is from above, which is first *Pure*, and then *Peaceable*, Jam. 3. 17. they are peaceable in themselves, and are Peace-makers, and Peace-preservers; they are for Peace Ecclesiastical, Political, Domestical; they are for all manner of Peace, save peace with sin, Peace and Piety, Peace and Truth is their hearts desire, *Zach. 8. 19. Heb. 12. 14.* the Gospel like a Sword divides between men and their sins, and so breaks worldly wicked peace; *Mat. 10. 34, 35.* but establisheth internal, real, solid peace; *I came not to send Peace, but a Sword*, Christ speaks not of the effect, but of the event of the Gospel; not what the Gospel procures properly *Et per se*, but Accidentally, when it meets with wicked mens corruptions; not what it works in the faithful, but in the unfaithful. The Gospel in it self brings that peace which passeth all understanding, to such as submit unto it, but wicked men opposing it make the tumult and division, and therefore it is they, and not the Gospel that must be blamed. Real godly men that walk up to their Principles and Priviledges, are the Blessings of a Land, the Pillars of a Nation, the Beauty and Bulwarks of the places where they live. They keep Islands from destruction, *Job 22. ult.* and therefore they cannot truly be called the destroyers of them.

See Cyril on  
Joh 9. 13.  
p. 244.

As *Sampsons* strength lay in his hair, so the Governours of the Nation shall say, that in the inhabitants of *Jerusalem* is our strength, *Zach. 12. 5.*

It is ignorance and prophaneness which makes a people rude and rebellious, but where Religion comes in the power of it, and men obey not for fear, but for conscience sake, there are no better Servants and Subjects in the world; none more faithful to their trusts, none pray more for their Governours, nor pay their dues more freely and fully to them. These are they that will venture their Lives and Estates for their honour, when such as serve them for their owne ends, will leave them and forsake them.

Yet lest any should think me singular take the testimony of one (that as the times goe) may passe for many. *Be tender over good men* (saith *Doctor Gauden*) these are those that shall see Gods face in glory, and so are more fit to enjoy the favour of Kings on earth. These are they that best know the duty, honour, and fidelity they owe to Majesty, and make a conscience to pay it; because it is a point of holinesse so to doe. These are the *Propugnacula & munimenta regni & Ecclesie* (as was said of *St. Ambrose*) the strength, honour, and security of Church and State under God, and his Majesties care and pious providence, these are in some sort the (*Tutelares genii*) Protectors of his Majesties Person, health, wealth, life, Queen, Crown, and Posterity; whilst they daily lift up pure hands, and holy hearts to the God of Heaven, for his Majesties safety and happinesse. These are like *Moses and Elias*, the Chariots and Horse-men of Israel. These have power with God, by their Prayers, counsel, and good examples they lye in the gap, and hinder the inundation of Sin and Judgement. To these we owe under God, the enjoyment of our peace, plenty, safety, and religion, and of the blessing of blessings temporal, a pious and gracious Prince. Thus fully and truly the Doctor; so that it appears on all hands, that Gods people are not the Troublers, but the Pillars and peaceable ones in Israel; this will yet further appear, if we consider these four things:

- 1 Their Principles.
- 2 Their Titles.
- 3 Their Prayers.
- 4 Their Practices.

*Doctor Gauden*  
in a Sermon  
Preacht at  
Court, 1642.  
on Heb 12. 14.  
P. 35. &c.

Bishop Lati-  
mers Ser. p.  
114. b.

See more in  
Mr. *Burroughs*  
Gracious Spi.  
ch. 6. p. 137.  
&c. and his *I.*  
*renicum*, ch. 3. 1.  
32, 33. and the  
interest of Eng-  
land in three  
Queries, p. 41.  
& 48, &c.

1 Sedition and conspiracy is against their *Principles*, they are taught to fear God first, and then to honour the King as his Vice-gerent on earth. They obey not for fear (as wicked men doe) but for conscience sake; as they give unto God what is Gods, so they give unto *Cesar* what is *Casars*. It is the want of good Preachers (saith Bishop Latimer) that is the cause of Rebellion, if there were good Bishops (saith he) there would be no rebellion, it is ignorance that breeds rudeness and rebellion, as we have seen in the *Welch*, *Irish*, &c. Light and Grace take away that ferity, cruelty, and turbulency that is in our natures, it makes the Lion and the Lamb to dwell together in peace, *Isa.* 11. 6, 7, 8. Inordinate love of the World is the great make-bate of the World; now Grace loosens mens hearts from the world, & makes *Abraham* to part with his owne right to *Lot*, though he were superiour to him in age and place, yet he yeelds to him for peace sake, *Gen.* 13. 8, 9. and Christ himself lest he should give offence to others, paid tribute to *Cesar*, though he could have pleaded immunity, *Mai.* 17. 27. Besides, their God is the God of peace, *Rom.* 15. 33. 2 *Thess.* 3. 16. Christ their Saviour is the Prince of peace, *Isa.* 9. 6. the Spirit that dwells in them is a Dove; the emblem of peace; the Gospel which they beleieve is the Gospel of peace; they are endued with the wisdom which is from above, which is pure and peaceable; the peace of God rules in their hearts, and moderates their passions, *Col.* 3. 15. so that we need not fear their offending, who are so strictly bound *renicum*, ch. 3. 1. against offending.

2 The *Titles* which are given them in Scripture, shew that they are men of peace, *Dauids* Motto is theirs, *I am for peace*, *Psal.* 110. 7. hence they are called Doves, not Kites; Lambs, not Lions; Sheep, not Wolves; and the Church is compared to a Vine, not to a Thorn; to a Virgin, to a Widow, to a Worm, *Isa.* 41. 14. all which are harmless, innocent, inoffensive creatures; subject to wrong, but doe none, and this the Churches enemies know right well, which makes them so ready to abuse them. The Crow will pull wool off a Sheeps back, it dares not bee so bold with a Wolf, or a Fox.

3 It is against their *Prayers* to be turbulent, they pray for the peace of *Jerusalem*, and for the peace of the places where they

they dwell, *Jer. 29. 7.* whilst others are drinking Healths, and breaking the Kings Lawes by their debauchery, these are praying for Kings, and for all in authority under them, that by their means we may live in godliness and peace, yea so farre are they from creating troubles, that by their Prayers, counsel, and good example, they keep many troubles and disorders out of a Land.

4 It is against their *Practises*. Their practice is to bless them that curse them; to pray for them that persecute them; to doe good to them that hate them, and to preserve their lives, who seek their deaths, as *Bradford* did by *Bourne*. If their enemy be hungry, they feed him; if naked, they cloath him, and so heap coals of fire upon his head. *Rom. 12. 20.*

Besides, in the places where they dwell, they labour to suppress Sin, and to promote Piety, and this conduceth very much to the peace and prosperity of a Nation. Where the salt of Grace is, there is peace, *Mark 9. ult.* It was Prophesied, that in Gospel-times they should not hurt in all Gods holy Mountain, and why so? *for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord,* and that will make men pious and peaceable, *Iſa. 11. 9.* Ignorant men are brutish merciless men, the dark places of the earth are habitations of cruelty, *None so bloody as blind Idolaters.*

See Mr. *Pryn*  
his Treatise of  
the Treachery  
and Disloyalty  
of Papists to  
their Sovereign  
printed 1643.

## VERSE II.

*For thus saith Amos, Jeroboam shall dye by the sword,  
and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their  
owne Land:*

**I**N this Verse *Amaziah* the Priest labours to make good his Charge against *Amos*, to this end he produceth a double accusation against him.

1 He chargeth him as an enemy to the King, and that hee had conspired against him, saying, *Jeroboam shall dye by the sword*; this was a manifest untruth, for *Amos* never said, the King shall dye by the sword, but that *God would rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword*, vers. 9. and so he did, for though we do not read that *Jeroboam* himself dyed by the sword, yet *Zachariah* his Son was slaine by *Shallum* in the sight of



the people, which put an end to the Stock of *Jehu*, according to what the Lord had threatned against the house of *Jehu*, viz, that in the fourth generation his Stock should cease; so that *Amaziah* reports *Amos* his Doctrine to the King, not fully, but fraudulently, applying that to the Father, which *Amos* spake against the Posterity. Thus wicked men, like their Father the Devil, adde and detract from Gods Word, and mens words, so as may best suit with their owne designs.

2 He chargeth him with disheartning the people, in saying, that *Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their owne Land*. This was true, but so farre from being a Crime, that it was *Amos* his glory, that he faithfully and freely delivered the Message that God commanded him to deliver to his people; and here we may observe, that when this false Prophet recites *Amos* his words to the King, there he alters the words, and makes things worse; but when he comes to speak of the people, then he can speak truth.

He had used all his Oratory to perswade the King to punish *Amos*, but *Jeroboam* knew that he was a Man of God, and therefore durst not doe his Prophet any harm; and the rather, because he had observed that God had sharply punished *Jeroboam* the first with a withered arme, and *Ahab*, and other his Predecessors that had opposed his Prophets; their harms made him wise. The context shewes that the King was cold in the cause, for we read of no answer that the King gave to *Amaziah*, peradventure he might discerne his falshood and his flattery, and so sleight him; this is very probable by that which followes in the next verse, where *Amaziah* falls to flattering *Amos*, since by force he could not hurt him.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 It is an old trick of the Devil and his agents, to wrest and mis-recite the words of Gods servants.

When they can finde nothing justly against them, then they fall to belying them, and to devise devices against them. The Devil is termed *Diabolus*, he hath this name given him because he is a violent, and virulent *Calumniator*, and belyer of the Saints, and so are his followers, and therefore they

they also are called (Διάβολοι, Calumniatores) by their Fathers name, false-accusers. So Job 1. 9. Acts 6. 11, 13. Rom. 3. 8.

2 It is the property of false Prophets to mingle some truth with their lyes, the better to deceive the simple.

So doth this Priest of Bethel here, and so doe Mase-Priests. As the Fowler mixeth some Wheat with his Chaff, and sticks some Corn upon his Lime-twiggs to catch the sooner: so Satan puts a fine gloss upon his false wares that they may sell the better. He and his can produce Scripture for a need, they can transforme themselves into Angels of Light, and can cite Scripture to draw you from Scripture, and tempt you to irreligion by religious Arguments mis-applied. Epicurus that was licentious in his Life, and lewd in his Opinions, holding that there were no Gods, or else that they were idle, and cared not for governing the World, yet sometimes he commends the pleasures of the mind, that so he might vend his Epicurean pleasures the better.

Epicurus aut  
Deos fragit otio-  
sos, aut nullos,  
Minut. Felix,  
who lived in  
the third Cen-  
tury.  
V. Ross his  
Coniut. of  
Browns vulgar  
errors, ch. 16.  
p. 255.

3 That Princes usually are more indulgent to Gods Prophets than Idolatrous Priests.

Amaziah the Priest would have Amos put to death for a Traytor, but the King spares him. It is observed, that the greatest hatred is usually amongst men of the same profession; it is not the King, but the Priest of Bethel that prosecutes Amos. Thus it was with Jeremy, when the Priests were enraged against him, and sought his life, then the Princes plead for him, and save him, Jer. 26. 8, 16. and after when the Princes cast him into the Dungeon, then the King released him, Jer. 38. 10. So our King Edward the Third preserved Wickliffe from the fury of Simon Sudbury Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, and after the Duke of Lancaster became his great Patron against the persecuting Prelates of those times.

Figulus invidet  
figulo, & sacer  
fabro.

## VER. 12, 13.

*Also Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou Seer, goe see thee away into the Land of Judah, and there eat bread, and Prophecy there ; But Propheſie not againe at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and it is the Kings Court.*

*ut in am Jero-  
boamum imita-  
rentur noſtri  
ſeculi principes,  
qui Amazie ca-  
lumnias non  
magis fecit, nec  
quicquam in  
Prophetam du-  
vius ſtatuit.  
Gualter.*

**T**His falſe Prophet ſeeing he could not remove *Amos* by force, ſets upon him now by fraud ; the King not being moved with his Meſſage, and reſuſing to meddle with *Amos*, either for fear of the people, who knew *Amos* to be an holy and eminent Prophet, and ſo muſt needs have great influence upon them, or elſe for ſome other politick reſpects, the King ſpared him.

But ſince the Lions ſkin will not doe, this Promotor will try what the Fox can doe ; to this end he gives *Amos*, 1. An honourable title. 2. Friendly counſel, one would think, perſwading him by any means to leave *Iſrael*, and goe to *Judah*, where he might be ſafe and free.

q. d. *I am the High Prieſt of Bethel, and have my preferment and profits in Iſrael ; but thou art of Judah, and cameſt from Tekoa ; prethee goe to thy Tekoits again, and trouble not my Bethelians ; come not in my Dioceſs, I promiſe thee, I will not come in thine ; hinder not my gaine, and take thine and ſpare not.*

In this Verſe this ſubtile Sophiſter packs up much in a little room, and uſeth almoſt as many Arguments as words.

1 He gives him an honourable Compellation, *O Seer*, it is not, *O unlearned Herdsman*, or, *O ſeditious Seeds-man*, as before ; but he gives him a title of honour, the better to hide his malicious deſignes, and to inſinuate himſelf into *Amos*, See how quickly wicked men can change their Language, and bleſſe thoſe whom but lately they curſed ; before it was *Amos* the Conſpirator, but now it is *Amos* the Servant of God, and the Seer. The Prophets of old were called *Seers*, 1 *Sam.* 9.9. *Iſa.* 36. 10. God inlightned them by his Spirit, and made known to them his ſecrets by Viſions, hence they were called

Seers,

*Scors, Numb. 6. 12. 6. Ezek. 1. 1.* Some make *Amaziah* here to call the Prophet *Scor*, Ironically, by way of ſcorn and contempt, as if the Prophet had been ſome Fanatick, and his Viſions vanities. But the contexture of the Diſcourſe is againſt this; for *Amaziah* gives the Prophet his due title, but in a flattering way, the better to effect his deſign upon him.

2 Left this Priest ſhould ſeeme to be mad without reaſon, he now produceth Arguments to perſwade *Amos* to be gone. Man being a Rational Creature, may ſooner be drawn by reaſon than driven by force; *Amaziah* will try what this will doe.

*Goe, flee thee away into the Land of Judah, there eat bread, and Propheſie there.*

9. d. Be gone with all ſpeed, thou haſt yet liberty ſo to doe, thou haſt now an opportunity of eſcaping, and mayeſt freely paſſe without any ſtopping, let it not ſlip, leſt it repent thee when it is too late. So that this is an Argument a *facili*.

2 *Flee*, with all ſpeed be gone from amongſt us, for there is no ſtaying long in ſafety here; thou art encompassed here with ſnares and dangers, and therefore if thou loveſt thy life, pack up and bee gone, *Citò, citius, citiſſime*, leſt thou bee caught and killed. So that this was an Argument a *neceſſario*.

3 *Into the Land of Judah.* The better to perſwade him to flee, this Priest hath found out another Topick, *viz.* a convenient place to flee to, and that was his owne Country; thou cameſt from *Tekoa*, *Amos 1. 1.* and no man can blame thee for going home againe, eſpecially ſince thou art ſo hated here. There thou wilt dwell amongſt thine owne kindred and acquaintance in peace and plenty, in love and ſafety; whereas here thou art a Stranger, and a blunt Prophet, and canſt expect none of theſe things from us. As a friend therefore I counſel thee with all ſpeed to be gone, for both King and Kingdome are reſolved to keep their Calves; and if thou come any more to preach here againſt them, beware leſt they catch thee, and kill thee. But *Amos* fears no ſuch Scar-crows, God ſent him not to *Judah*, but to *Iſrael*, and there he muſt and will abide. It was *Jonahs* ſin to fly to *Tarſhiſh*, when hee ſhould have gone to *Nineveh*. A Miniſter is not *ſui juris*,

ris, but must preach when and where his Lord and Master commands him.

4 *There eate bread*; that is, Get thy living there, *Gen. 3. 19* for if thou stayest here thou mayest starve, here is no body will succour or support thee; for thou art a burden both to Prince and people. Here is nothing for thee to eate, here is no profit to be had, and by thy preaching so openly at *Bethel*, against the Calves of *Bethel*, thou marrest our markets too. But goe to *Judab*, there thou wilt be maintained like a Prophet indeed: there thou wilt live more securely, and be maintained more plentifully; there is King *Uzziah*, alias *Azariah*, that loves such precise ones as thou art, *2 King. 15. 13.* and a people that prize men of thy straine, and will not suffer thee to want. Thus this mercenary false Prophet measures *Amos* by himself, thinking that gaine would intice him away, as if *Amos* had been one of those who Prophefied for a little Lucre, for a handful of Barley, or a mouthful of Bread, *Ezek. 13. 19. Micha 3. 11.* so that this is an Argument *ab utilitate*.

5 *Prophefie there.* Here this subtil Priest Proleptically prevents an Objection; whereas *Amos* might have said, what? would you have me idle, and leave that employment to which God so signally, and extraordinarily called me? Nor so, (saith *Amaziah*) I doe not bid thee flee, that thou mayest be idle or silent (for if he had done so, his fraud had been too apparent) but I bid thee goe to *Judab*, and Prophefie there, where thou wilt have double honour; that is, both countenance and maintenance, both which thou wantest here. Thou lovest to be plaine and free against sin, why get thee to *Judab*, there they will be glad of thee, and there thou mayest declaime freely against the sins of *Israel*, and threaten us without fear. Here thou art molested with Altars and Calves, with Idols and Images, *Amos 3. 14.* but get thee to *Jerusalem*, and there thou wilt be free from these superstitious fopperies, and lying vanities. There exercise thy gift of preaching, and get thy living by it, as I doe by my Priesthood at *Bethel*, where I live peaceably, and plentifully with my Oblations and Sacrifices; I shall not envie thee (get what thou canst at *Judab*) doe not thou envie me my Morfels at *Bethel*.

6 He argues *ad amno*, and tells him that it was dangerous

rous for him to preach any more at *Beſhel*, as for what is past that is pardoned, provided thou come no more amongst us at *Beſhel*, for it is the Kings Court, and the Kings Chappel, and he will not endure to be affronted there.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 That wicked man are very seditions in opposing the faithful Ministers of God.

What industry and activity doth this Priest of *Beſhel* use to root *Amos* out of *Israel*. He sends to the King, and accuseth *Amos* for a Traytor; and when force will not doe, he playes the Fox, and under pretence of friendship prōwades him to leave his station, and to flee the Land. So *Pharaoh*, how industrious was he to destroy *Israel*; how active was *Haman* to have the *Jewes* destroyed, and what a great sum doth he promise to the King to effect it, no less than ten thousand talents of silver, *Hest. 4. 9.* So *Nehemiabs* enemies, what force and fraud did they use to hinder his repairing of the Temple; how faine would they have had him flee; as *Amaziah* would have had *Amos* here, that so he might have reproached him for a Fugitive, and one that was conscious to himself of his own guilt, and therefore he fled for it.

Q. The Question then will be, whether it be lawfull to flee in time of persecution? *Math 10. 23*

A. In some Cases it may, as, 1 If a man be but a young beginner, and find not strength to bear the brunt and heat of the day, he may with-draw for a time.

2 If the Persecution be personal, against a particular man, or Minister, and not against the whole Church, he may use his liberry. So did *Moses*, *Elijah*, *David*, *Christ*, *Paul*.

But when Gods time is come, that he calls us to seal to his truth even with our dearest lives, we must not love them to the death, *Revel. 12. 11.* but rejoyce that we have any thing of worth to lay down for Christ; like the valiant Horse, we must goe forth to meet the armed man, *Job 39. 21.* so did that accomplished, courageous Martyr, Mr. *Fryth*, when some that loved him had contrived his escape, he told them it must not be; for (saith he) if you should leave me here and goe to Croydon, declaring to the Bishop that you had lost Fryth, I would surely follow



See Mr. Clarke follow after as fast as I could, and bring them newses that I had Lived, 1 Vol. in found and brought Fryth again.  
the Life of Mr. Fryth.

[ See this Case more fully handled, in Mr. Perkins C. Conf. lib. 2. ch. 11. Q. 3. and on Heb. 11. 35. p. 191. and D. Geo. Abbot, Thesis 5. p. 169. and in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 11. Obs. 5. p. 202. Doct. Tho. Taylor on Self-denial, p. 23. folio, in fine. ]

2 Wicked men many times are subtile men.

The Devil chuseth Serpents for his Instruments, *Cupit ab his ornari Diabolus*, he thinks it an ornament to his Cause and Kingdom to get wits about him, how subtilly here doth this Priest act his part ; his words are smother than oyl, and yet are they very swords, *Psal. 55. 23.* Satans Instruments (like their Father the Devil ) can transform themselves into Angels of Light, 2 Cor. 11. 13, 14. when such speak fair, beleeve them not, for there are seven abominations in their hearts, *Prov. 26. 25.* we had need then to be wise as Serpents, and to watch not only against a raging, but against a fawning enemy ; not only against the Lion Rampant, but also against the Lion Couchant. The worlds flatteries are more to be feared than its frowns, its courtesies, than its injuries. Many that have stood it out manfully against open hostility, yet have been insnared by flattery. Take heed of those *Joabs* and *Judasesses* that kiss and kill, 2 Sam. 20. 9, 10. watch not only against open, but also against secret insinuating enemies, which under pretence of friendship seek thy ruine ; the Devil gains thousands, and ten thousands this way. Wee should observe his depths, and not be ignorant of his methods and devices ; but stop our ears against his Syrens, when they seek to undermine us.

See my Com.

on 2 Tim. 3. 17.

Obs. 2. p. 169.

3 That titles of honour may be given to Gods Ministers.

*O thou Seer*, it is not, *O thou Liar*, thou Viper, thou Wolf, thou Robber, thou Murderer, thou Conjurer, thou Juggler, Devil, &c. as those black blasphemous Devils the *Quakers* call us. *Amaziah* ( though an Idolatrous Priest ) yet had learnt better language than so.

4 The Ministers of God should be Seers.

They must not be blind Guides, nor Seers that can see nothing but what tends to their owne gain ; nor Seers of Lyes and Vanities, ( as it is said of false Prophets ) *Ezek. 13. 7, 8,*

9. 23. & 32. 28. but they must be men of knowledge, *Mal.* 2. 7. and have the Tongue of the Learned, to speak a word in season to him that is weary. Look what the eye is to the body, that are (or at least-wise that should be) Pastors to the Church, to watch over the Flock for good, and to direct it in paths of Piety. Hence Ministers are called the Eye, *1 Cor.* 12. 17. Stars, and the Light of the World, *Mat.* 5. 14. burning and shining Lights, *John* 5. 35. which help to enlighten the World with the light of sound Doctrin. Hence it is that the Prophets of old were so oft called *Seers*, *Sadoc* was called a Seer, *2 Sam.* 15. 27. and *Gad*, *2 Sam.* 24. 11. and *Heman*, *1 Chron.* 25. 5, &c.

## VER. 13.

*But Propheſie not againe any more at Bethel, for it is the Kings Chappel, and the Kings Court.*

**W**EE have seen this *Bethelian* Priests counsel, Therically and Positively set down. *verf.* 12. In this verse we have his advice Antithetically set down, *But Propheſie no more at Bethel*, come not within my Diocess and Jurisdiction. where I and others are bound to attend, and officiate by the Kings *Mandamus*. In the words we have, 1 A Prohibition, *Propheſie no more at Bethel, q. d.* Thou hast preached six Sermons already against the State, the King hath pardoned thee for them all, and passed an Act of Oblivion, provided thou preach no more so; but if thou be like to new Wine, which must have vent (for silence is painful to a real Prophet) yet come not to *Bethel*, but rather goe to *Judab* thine owne Country, for I am resolved to suspend and silence thee from preaching here, and that for two Reason.

1 Because it is the Kings Sanctuary, and the Courtiers will not beleieve thee, nor abide thee.

*Vide quibus argumentis pugnant, qui veritati adversantur, astute quidem aliquot rationes, & interdum Scripturis agant, sed maxima fiducia illis in regum ac principum autoritate reposita est. Gualter in locum.*

2 The Kings Court is there, and they cannot have while to attend thee; it is in vain therefore for thee to abide in such a place, where thou canst have neither Credence, nor Audience.

*Ibi urgente Pro-  
phetâ & dura  
fulminante va-  
ticinia contra  
illum locum,  
spes nulla relin-  
quebatur copios  
lucris. Sanctius.  
Sec Amos 4. 4.*

*Mikdash me-  
lech, Sanctuari-  
um vel Sacrari-  
um regis. The  
word is alwaies  
used for a San-  
ctuary, Exo. 15.  
17. & 25. 8.  
Ila, 8. 14. &  
16. 12. Ezek.  
5. 11.  
Periculosum est  
scribere in eum,  
qui potest pro-  
scribere.*

*In Dei cultu non  
speciose ratio-  
nes sequenda,  
sed Dei verbum.  
Mercer.*

We may add a third Reason, which was the real ground of this High-Priests prohibition, and that was because *Amazi-ahs* gain lay there, *q. d.* Come not here with thy New-light, declaim not here against our Idolatry, lest thou marre our markets, and hinder the sale of our false-wares. This was the truth of the business, though somewhat else was pretended, and the King and Kingdoms interest pleaded.

*Bethel* was a City in the Kingdome of *Israel*, though properly it belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*; but *Jeroboam* the first setting up one of the golden Calves there, *1 King. 12. 29.* turned this *Bethel* (which was sometimes the House of God) into *Beth-aven*, the house of vanity and iniquity; *Samaria* was the more populous place, but the Calves were in most request at *Bethel*, and therefore the Prophet testifies against the Idolatry of that place especially.

*It is the Kings Chappel*, or as the word most genuinely signifies, it is the Kings Sanctuary; *i. e.* it is a place consecrated by the Kings Predecessors for the worship of the Calves, to the which he bears a singular devotion, and where he often keeps his Royal residence, and doth celebrate his solemn Worship, and Divine Service. It is therefore dangerous for thee, *O Amos*, to preach against the Kings Religion in the Kings Chappel, in the face of the Court, and the flower of the Land. To doe so in any part of the Land is not tolerable, but to preach thus at *Bethel* is most intolerable. *Jeroboam* the first set up a Calf at *Dan* as well as at *Bethel*, but this at *Bethel* was most frequented both by King and People. 1. Because it was nearer to *Samaria* than *Dan*, which was situate in the North part of the Land. 2. For its *Antiquity*, because it was the place where *Jacob* of old did Worship God. It was of greater Antiquity than the Temple at *Jerusalem*, yet for all these specious reasons they sinned in forsaking the Rule, and not Worshipping at *Jerusalem* as God had appointed. So that whereas this Priest cries out, this is *Bethel* the Kings Chappel, we say so too, yet that is no prejudice to Gods Prerogative.

*It is the Kings Court*, or, it is the Kings House, for his Palace was there. Though the Kings prime Palace was in *Samaria*, yet he had other Palaces in other places, as at *Jezreel* and *Bethel*, where he used to reside for a time; that he might be a Pattern of Worship to the people. Or, it is the House of the

Beth manla-  
chab, Domus  
regni.

the Kingdom (as it is in the Fountain) that is, the Royal Court, or the Sovereign Court of Judicature for the Kingdom is at *Bethel*, whither come a great confluence of people, and where Civil affairs, and matters of State are debated, and therefore it is not safe nor seemly for thy rude rusticity, which knowes no Royalty, to abide there. The King hath Chaplaines enough of his owne (that are compleat Courtiers) to preach before him; he needs no such rustical Prophets, and blunt Anti-Courtiers as thou art; he hath Natives enough, but thou art a Stranger, and comest from another Country: Hee hath Prelates and Priests of eminent parts, every way accomplished for the work; whereas thou art a poor obscure Prophet, that comest *ab hira, non ab ara*, from the Herds, not from the Schools, and so art altogether unfit for the Court. Wouldest thou but Prophecie smooth and pleasant things, thou mightest abide here still, but thou art so rough and rugged, so plain and down-right, that our Courtiers ears cannot abide thy words; so that there is no staying for thee here but with abundance of danger. Thus this grand Impostor would have frightened the true Prophet from his duty, that so hee might keep up the reputation of his Idolatrous Priests at *Bethel*, who for filthy Lucre, that they might rob the true Prophets of their Tythes and Offerings, did by their preaching foment both Rebellion in the State, and Schism in the Church, for the Sanctuary at *Bethel* robbed the Temple at *Jerusalem*.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Wicked men doe their utmost to silence faithful Ministers.*

They prohibit them Preaching, *Prophecie not*. The like complaint we have, *Amos 2. 12. Micha 2. 6.* they say to the Prophets, *Prophecie not*; they silence them that they may sin without controul, and goe to Hell without any hindrance. Thus the Rulers of the *Jews* forbid *Peter* and *John* to preach any more in the name of *Jesus*, *Acts 4. 17, 18. & 5. 40.* what is this but to fight against God, and to countermand his commands? he bids his *Amoses* preach, the *Amaziah*s of the World say no. Did ever any man thus harden himself against God, and prosper? if he that with-holds Corn from the people, him shall the people curse, *Prov. 11. 26.* what a sad curse

will light upon those that with-hold Spiritual corn from them, and deprive them of their faithful Pastors which are the light of the World, the Guides, the Fathers, the Physicians, the Pillars of the Church; such as forbid men to Preach, please neither God nor man, 1 Thes. 2. 15, 16. Herod was a wicked man, yet this was his sinning sin, and is said to surmount all the rest, that he put John in Prison, Luke 3. 20. he added this above all, that he shut up John in prison; and see what befell Amaziah here for opposing Amos, ver. ult.

Obj. But the Minister denounceth Judgements against us, which we cannot bear.

A. Let him preach Mercies or Menaces, if God have sent him we may not silence him, but must thankfully receive Threatnings as well as Promises, Judgements as well as Mercies; they are both necessary for us.

2 The great ones of the world cannot brook plain Preachers.

These Gallants look upon such blunt and bold Amoses as a pack of Fanaticks, a company of rude, indiscreet Persons, that dare venture to reprove such as them for their sins. God calls his Ministers Salt, Matth. 5. 13. but these would have them Honey, to preach only pleasing and humerous things unto them. Such were those, Isa. 30. 10. They say to the Seers, see not, and to the Prophets, Prophecie not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, Prophecie deceits. Great men many times have great corruptions, which they cannot endure should be touched, their tender ears cannot away with sound Doctrine, they must have smooth and pleasant things, or nothing, Courtiers love Verba byssina, soft and silken words. Though we approve of Prudence in Preaching before great ones, yet flattery we abhor. We may not betray the truth to please men; we are sent to profit, not to please; to edifie the heart, not to gratifie the ear. Had Amos preached high-flown Notions, or Doctrine without application, he might have been a Priest for Bethel; he might preach in generals, but he must not Prophecie of Gods Judgements against them, Prophecie not. Men can bear with Physicians, and suffer them to tell them of the Diseases of their Bodies; and the Lawyer, to tell them of the flaws in their estates; only the Minister, who is for the Soul, he must not speak a word. Prophecie not, whereas great men have most need of faithful Prophets, because

Quid est prædicare, nisi furorem mundi in se derivare?  
Luth. r.

Multi favent  
Majestati, magis quam veritati. Bern.

cause they are encompassed with so many flatterers.

<sup>3</sup> *Wicked men put fair names upon foul places and practices.*

*Bethel* here was become *Beth-aven*, yet they call it a Sanctuary; when indeed it was the Devils Brothel-house, polluted with vile Idolatry and iniquity. So *Papists* put fine titles upon their foul wares, to vent them the better. The *Pope* calls himself the Servant of the Servants of God, yet makes himself King of Kings, and is a profest enemy to Gods Servants. The *Quakers* call themselves the Saints of the most high, when they are profest enemies to God, his Worship, wayes, &c. The *Arminians* seeme to magnifie Free-grace as much as any of the Orthodox, but descend to particulars and their errors will soon appear. It is often professed by *Arminius* (saith a Reverend Divine) that he attributes as much to Grace as any other; that there is nothing said by others concerning the efficacy of Grace, which is not also affirmed by himself; yea that he acknowledgeth whatsoever may be thought or imagined for the opening and setting forth of the power of grace, and that he is mis-reported by those that render him injurious to the grace of God, and one that attributes too much to Free-wil. We find in *Augustine*, that *Pelagius* professeth as much concerning himself, and yet in the meane time this is true, that if *Arminius* his Opinion stand good, all this efficacy of grace which he so magnifies, and amplifies in words, depends on the will of man, in regard that by vertue of its native liberty, it may receive or reject this grace; use it or not use it; render it effectual or vain, &c. Thus he.

D. Preston in his Position of the irresistibility of converting Grace. P. 13. &c.

VER. 14, 15.

*Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no Prophet, neither was I a Prophets Son, but I was an Herd-man, and a gatherer of Sycomore fruit.*

*And the Lord took mee as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Goe Prophesie unto my people Israel.*

**V**EE have seen *Amaziah*s design, by force and fraud to suppress *Amos*; we are now come to *Amos* his Answer, which consists of two parts; I An *Apology* for what



what he did, grounded upon Gods extraordinary calling him to the work. 2. His *Prophecie*, which is two-fold.

1. Particular, containing those particular Judgements which should befall

*Amaziah.*

His Wife.

His Children.

2. General, containing the utter destruction of *Israel*, vers. ult.

In these two Verses we have *Amos* his answer, wherein he constantly and courageously maintaines what he had done; and is so farre from desisting or forsaking of his Station, that by an holy Antiperistasis he growes more bold and resolute, confirming what he had spoken against *Israel*, and adding moreover a dreadful Commination against this Arch-Priest for opposing him in the Work of the Lord. He feared not his imperious Injunctions, and Lordly Prohibition, but boldly asserts his Calling, and goes on in the exercise of it, maugre the malice of all opposition whatsoever.

So that here we have an Implicite reason, why *Amos* durst not desist from Prophecyng to *Israel*, viz. because he was called extraordinarily by God to Prophecie unto them. He was no intruder, but a truly called and qualified Officer; he did nothing rashly or seditiously, but he seriously and soberly discharged the duties of that place to which God had so signally called him.

Now the better to clear his Call (which was the foundation of his comfort and confidence) he first tells us Negatively, what he was not, *I was no Prophet, nor Prophets Son*, q. d. I was no Prophet either by birth or breeding, either by Original or Succession. Some were chosen to be Prophets before they were bred or born, as *Jer.* 1. 5. others among the *Israelites* were Prophets by succession; others by preparation, were trained up betimes in the knowledge and study of the Scripture; in Colledges and Seminaries of Learning, to supply the wants of the Church. The Prophets that taught them, were called their *Fathers*. and the Scholars were called, *the Sons of the Prophets*, 2 *King.* 3. 3, 7, 15. & 4. 38. & 6. 1. *Mar.* 10. 24. *Amos* ingenuously confesseth, that he was none of these; hee

was

was neither *Nabi*, nor *ſon Nabi*, neither Prophet, nor Prophets Son; he was not brought up at *Perhet*, 2 King. 2. 3. or *Joricho*, verſ. 5. or *Gilgal*, 2 King. 4. 38. nor at the feet of any learned *Gamaliel*.

2 Poſitively, he tells us plainly what he was, *viz.* an illiterate *Herdman* of the Tribe of *Judah*, dwelling at *Tekoa*, a City in *Judah*, but extraordinarily called by God, from his Country-calling, of feeding Cattel, to feed his people *Iſrael* with the Bread of Life, *Amos* 1. 1.

This he mentions not to make his Meſſage contemptible, but to procure the more reſpect and authority to his Propheſie, ſince he was not called and qualified in an ordinary way, but immediately, and extraordinarily by God himſelf.

*I was an Herdman*; Such were uſeful in their kind, they had many of them in thoſe dayes, becauſe their riches lay much in cattel. Their leſſer cattel were tended by Shepherds, and their greater by Herdmen, *Gen.* 13. 5. & 24. 35. & 26. 16. Baker, bubulcus, 14. *Job* 1. 3. *Saul* himſelf before he was made King, was an Herdman, 1 Sam. 11. 5. 9. d. Behold the wonderful Works of God, that I who was never bred to this employment ſhould yet be able to Propheſie, and to confound ſuch learned Rabbies as you take your ſelves to be.

And a gatherer of *Sycamore* Ernits.

Yet more to magnifie Gods Free-grace, he ſets forth his mean condition from which the Lord had called him. He lived a ſolitary, country life, he was not bred up in Cities, or Academies, but amongſt Herds and Stalls, contenting himſelf with ſuch wild dyer as the *Sycamores* did afford. Moſt take the word *Sycamore* ſtrictly, for a kind of wild Figges, called *arbor media in Egyptian* Figges, or Baſtard-mulberries, which the poorer ſort of Ruſticks in theſe times fed upon.

But it may be taken Synecdochically, and Proverbially for any kind of coarſe dyer or fare. *I was a gatherer of Sycamore fruit*; that is, I was a poor man, of a low condition, even of the ſame rank with thoſe that uſe to feed upon wild Figges; I did not then turn Prophet for my belly, for I had learned to fare hardly, which thou *O Amaziath*, and thy Court-Prieſts can hardly doe, and therefore you ſooth up the Rulers in their Idolatry, that you may ſerve your owne turns, but *Sycamore* fruit will ſerve my turn.

Of *Sycamore-trees* there were great abundance in the Land of *Canaan*, as appears, *1 King. 10. 27. Isa. 9. 10. Luk. 19. 4.* and in *Egypt*, *Psal. 78. 47.* they were very fruitful, they bare fruit three or four times in the year, saith *Dioscorides*, lib. 1. c. 143. This fruit *Amos* might gather for himself, or for his family, or for to sell.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *As the Devil bath his Amaziahs to oppose the truth, so God his Amoses to defend it.*

The same day that *Pelagius* was born in *Britain*, the same day was *Saint Austine* born in *Affrica* to oppose him, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
2 Tim. 3. 8.  
Obs. 2. p. 155.

2 *God often chaseth the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and the things that are not (of any esteeme in the world) to confound the things that are of great esteeme amongst them, 1 Cor. 1. 27. 28.*

He usually hangs the greatest weights upon the weakest wyres, that so his name may have all the praise; if the Lord should alwayes work by excellent Instruments, we should Idolize the Instruments and forget God. Hence the Lord often passeth by the eloquent Orator, and the learned Scribe, and chuseth an illiterate *Amos*, sending him from the Crib to the Court, to witness against the Idolatry of Princes, Priests, and People.

Thus in the Civil State he oft chuseth persons of low degree to rule his people, as *Moses, Saul, David*, all three called from their Flocks and Herds to rule his people, *Exo. 3. 1. 1 Sam. 9. 21. & 2 Sam. 7. 8. Psal. 113. 7. 8.* Thus in the Ecclesiastical estate he called *Elisha* from the Plow, *1 King. 19. 19. Matthew* from the receipt of Custom; all the Apostles were illiterate men till Christ gifted them extraordinarily, and fitted them for their work, *Acts 4. 13.* God loves to shew his power in weakness that the glory may be his, *2 Cor. 12. 9. Psal. 8. 3.* we have this Treasure in earthen Vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us, *2 Cor. 4. 7.*

See more in my  
Com. on 2 Tim.  
4. 21. Obs. 3.  
1. 479.

Obj. From hence the Anabaptists would cry down Universities, and Schools of Learning, the Lord took *Amos* from the Stall,

and

and Elisha from the Plow, and qualified them without Study, what need then this studying and Schooling? &c.

*Ans.* These were called extraordinarily, as appears by their extraordinary gifts; now extraordinary Cases cannot make an ordinary rule; because the Lord fed the *Israelites* with Mannah, it doth not therefore follow that we must sit still, and think to be so fed.

It is true, the *Anabaptists*, and fanatick frantick *Quakers*, doe all pretend to an extraordinary and immediate Call; when upon trial they are found not to have ordinary gifts, they can hardly write or read.

2 Examples in Scripture are not alwayes Argumentative, neither are we bound to follow them unless there bee a like call, causes; and other concurrent circumstances, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Pulpit-Guard. p. 55.

59.

3 *Grace makes men constant and courageous.*

How roundly and undauntedly doth *Amos* here deal with *Amacin*, notwithstanding all his threats and batteries, yet he stands like a Rock, justifies his Calling, and denounceth Judgements against the false Prophet himself, and confirms what he had spoken before against *Israel*. Thus the righteous are an everlasting foundation, *Prov.* 10. 25. The wicked fear where there is no ground of fear, and fly when none pursues them, but the righteous are bold as Lions, *Prov.* 28. 1. *Mark* 6. 18. *Acts* 23. 1.

#### VERSE 15.

*And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Goe, Prophesie unto my people Israel.*

**A** *Macin* counselled *Amos* to goe back to *Judah* from whence he came; to this *Amos* replies, I cannot, I dare not; for as I dare from thence by Divine command, so till I have the like command from him that sent me, I dare not return.

*Amos* comforts himself much with the sweet remembrance of that Call which he had from God, and therefore he tells us, how

H h h 2

the

Because *Amos* the Lord took him as hee was feeding and following the Flocks, and the Lord said to him (when he little thought of any such employment) *Goe, prophesie to my people Israel*. I did not thrust my self into the work, but it pleased the Lord to take me from that homely employment, and to injoyne me this task of Prophesying.

*son* is general, and relates to a flock of great Cattel, as well as small.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 We must obey God rather than men, Acts 4. 19. & 5. 29.

*Amaziah* bids *Amos* be gone, but *Amos* sayes, the Lord sent him to *Israel* and he will not stirre. Thus he opposeth Gods Commandement to *Amaziah*s prohibition. We may obey no man but in and for the Lord, Ephes. 6. 1. Hence the Midwives are commended for disobeying the wicked commands of *Pharaoh*, who would have had all the male Children killed, Exod. 1. 17.

2 God loves to appear to us when we are in our Callings.

Thus God appeared to *Moses* when he was keeping Sheep, Exod. 3. 1. to *David*, when he was following the Ewes; to *Saul*, when he was seeking Ases; to *Amos* here, when he was following the Herd; and to the Woman of *Samaria*, when she was drawing water, Joh. 4. 7.

3 When God calls us to forsake all we must readily doe it.

God commands *Amos* to leave his Herds, the Apostles to forsake their Nets, *Abraham* to forsake his owne Country and Kindred, *Zacheus* to come down and follow Christ, and they immediately did so, Mat. 4. 19, 26. Luke 19. 6. Gen. 12. 1, 4. True grace makes men willing to doe or suffer whatever God commands.

4 None may take upon them the Ministry without a Call.

*Amos* stirres not till God sayes, *Goe*; no man may assume this Office till he be called, Heb. 5. 4. should an Angel from Heaven come and preach, he must shew his Call, he may not violate the order which God hath set in his Church, Gal. 1. 8. Hence the Lord so oft complaines of false Prophets, that they ran and he sent them not, Jer. 14. 14. many run from their Callings without a Call, Zach. 13. 5. let such never look either

*Si aliud jubet  
imperator, aliud  
Deus, quid ju-  
dicatur? Ma-  
jor potestas De-  
us. Aug. de verb.  
Dom. Serm. 6.*

ther for protection, or success; let them preach never so loud, or so long, they shall never profit people because God is against them, *Jer. 23. 32.* I am against them that Prophesie false Dreams, and cause my people to erre by their lyes and lightness, yet *I sent them not*, mark what follows, *therefore they shall not profit this people*; that is, they shall doe them much hurt and mischief, it is a *Meisise*.

Be sure then to have a Call for what you doe, this will support you under your burdens, and comfort you in the midst of all tentations and trials, *Dan. 3. 16, 17, 18. Acts 4. 19, 20.* if the Lord have called us he will keep us, *Isa. 43. 6.* this is as a brazen wall to secure us; this made *Amos* so resolute and confident against *Amaziah*, and *Nabun* so free with *David*, *Elijah* with *Ahab*, *John Baptist* with *Herod*, and the *Apostles* with the world; it was the warrant of their Calling, that they had it from God, and not from man.

See more in  
my Pulpit-  
Guard. Arg. 2.  
p. 11, 12, 17.

This will make our Ministry successful, one *Elijah* sent by God, shall be too hard for two hundred and fifty false Prophets, though King *Ahab* and Queen *Jezabel* joyn with them, and ovyne them.

## VER. 16.

*Now therefore hear the Word of the Lord, thou sayest,  
Prophecie not against Israel, and drop not thy word a-  
gainst the house of Isaac.*

**A** Mos comes now to direct his speech to *Amaziah*, who had forbidden him to Prophesie, *Thou sayest, Prophecie not against Israel.* To this Prohibition *Amos* opposeth Gods Injunction, and is so farre from desisting, that he denounceth Gods Judgements against him, and bids him attend to what he had to say from the Lord against him. *q. d. Who art thou O vaine and vile man, that darest thus affront and contradict the Almighty; So that when he saith, Goe, Prophecie to Israel, yet thou sayest, Goe not to Israel, neither Prophecie there, but goe to Judah, and prophecie there. Hear therefore what the Lord hath determined against thee, Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, thy Children shall fall by the sword, &c.*

In these two last Verses we have a four-fold Judgement denounced against this Persecuting Priest, *vers. 17.*



2 Here is the Procarastical cause of these Judgements, and that was his opposing *Amos* in the Work of the Lord, using all means to silence him.

3 Here is a confirmation of the former Commination against *Israel*, ver. 11. *Hear the Word of the Lord*. We have heard thee speak, now doe thou hear God speak, for his Word is not like thine, a vaine, empty, ineffectual word; but a mighty, powerful, efficacious word, bringing down dreadful things upon the heads of malicious Persecutors, 2 *Cor.* 10. 6. God is ready to revenge the disobedience done to his commands: Gods Word layes hold on wicked men, *Zach.* 1. 6, and that which they accounted wind, becomes like fire to devour them, *Jer.* 5. 13, 14.

Thou sayest, *Prophesie not against Israel, and drop not thy word against the house of Isaac*; that is, *Prophesie not of Gods Judgements against the ten Tribes, who were descended from Abraham by Isaac the Son of the Promise, Gen.* 21. 12. see before ver. 9.

This dropping here is Metaphorical, and denotes those dreadful Judgements which should fall upon the heads of wicked men like a storme of raine, *Ezek.* 20. 46. & 21. 2, 3.

2 Dropping in Scripture is frequently taken in the sweetest sense, for gentle and sweet speaking, *Deut.* 32. 2. *Job* 29. 22. *My doctrine shall drop as the raine, and distill as the dew*; that is, it shall bee as useful and refreshing to men, as the dew and raine is to the grasse; as these soften the ground, and so make the fruites to grow up sweetly and abundantly; so the Word of God falling into an honest and good heart becomes effectual, making it more soft and fruitful in every good work, *Isa.* 55. 10. *Luke* 8. 15.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1 Wicked men are Antipodes to God. *Isaiah* 65. 11. They goe directly contrary to his commands. God bids *Amos* *Prophesie against Israel*, *Amaziah* forbids him. God bids *Amos* drop and denounce Judgements against *Israel*; *Amaziah* saith, *Amaziah*, if thou wilt drop, goe drop at *Judah*, for we will none of thy dropping heere. So true is that of *Lucifer*, *Home est inversus decalogus*, Man is a cross-grained-peece, directly

directly opposite to all Gods commands. There is in our Nature a deadly enmity to God, his Ways, his Worship, his Word, his Ordinances, his Prophets, his People, and to all that is good, *Rom. 8. 7. Col. 1. 21.*

Another Verse. 17.

*Therefore thus saith the Lord, thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City, and thy Sons and Daughters shall fall by the Sword, and thy Land shall be divided by Line, and thou shalt dye in a polluted Land, and Israel shall surely goe into Captivity forth of his owne Land.*

**I**N this Verse we have a dreadful Judgement denounced against this High-Priest of *Babel*, consisting of many Branches.

- 1 Contupration of his Wife, and that openly.
- 2 Loss of his Children.
- 3 Loss of his Lands.
- 4 Loss of his Liberty, and.
- 5 Loss of *Israel*.

Loe, this is the fruit of silencing Preachers, and forbidding Gods Ministers to Prophesie.

Here is the confirmation, or ratification of all this; *Dixit Dominus*, the Lord hath said it, who will certainly doe it.

*Thy Wife shall be an Harlot in the City.*

Interpreters are divided about the meaning of these words; some take them Actively, and the Original seems to favour it, viz. that his Wife should be an open Harlot, and a common Scrumper, not so much forced by Souldiers, as voluntarily addicted to it.

*Zanah, fornicatus, scortatus, fuit.* It implies a voluntary act. So *Gen. 38. 24. Judg. 19. 2. Ezek. 13. 34. Hof. 4. 13. 24.*

Others take the words Passively, that she should be violently forced and ravished by the *Assyrians* when they should take the City, according to that threatening against disobedient ones, *Dan. 28. 30. Sa. 2. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100.*

But if it were violent and involuntary, where were the Harlotry? *Thy Wife shall be an Harlot*, and to shew her unpur-

*Grandis dolor* impudency, she should do it not in the house, or in the fields, *incredibilis* or in a foreign Land, but openly in the City. *ignominia* quam *do maritus in media civitate uxoris injuriam probare non potest; non est tantus dolor in filia* *construpata, quantus in uxore polluta; maritus enim libentius audit uxorem interfici, quam* *pollut.* Hieron.

This is the first Punishment, the second follows.

2 *Thy Sons and thy Daughters shall fall by the sword.*

Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Children, nor only their Cattel, but all their Relations fare the worse for them.

3 Yet this is not all, *Thy Land shall be divided by Line.*

*Chebel, funis,*  
*Metonymycos*  
*Capitur pro par-*  
*te seu tractu*  
*terrae funiculis*  
*mensurato.*

Conquerours were wont to divide every one his Lor and portion by Lines and Cords; for of old they used Cords instead of Measuring-Rods, to divide their Land. Hence the *Lines* in Scripture are put for the Inheritance, or portion allotted to every one by Line, *Deut. 32. 9. 2 Sam. 8. 2. Psal. 16. 6. Micha. 2. 5.* Thus he should not only lose his Heires, but his Inheritance also.

*And thou shalt dye in a polluted Land.*

This is the fourth Punishment; Thou shalt dye a Captive in *Affria*, which was polluted with Heathenism and Idolatry.

This is reckoned as a Judgement, *Levit. 26. 38.* against *Asshur*, *Jer. 20. 6.* and *Comiab*, *Jer. 22. 25, 26.* The Land of Promise was called the Holy Land, and in comparison of it all other Nations were called and counted unclean, and they looked upon it as a misery to be buried in a strange Land, and not in *Canaan*.

*And Israel shall goe into Captivity.*

Not only thou, but all *Israel* whom thou hast helped to deceive, and hast hardned in their Idolatry and Sin, shall goe into Captivity with thee; and this men get by following Idolaters and Impostors, when the blind lead the blind both fall into the ditch.

*Israel shall surely goe into captivity.* God will no longer bear with them, since King and Kingdom are settled upon their Lees, and had so long sinned together, now the Lord tells them that they should suffer together, and goe Captives into *Affria*,

*Assyria*. as we see 2 *King*. 15. 29. & 17. 6, 18, 23, 24. & 18. 11. since they had abused that good Land which the Lord had given them, now it should spew them out for their Idolatry.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *God useth to retaliate Sinners, and to pay them in their owne coyn.*

This we see here excellently exemplified in *Amaziah*.

1 He inticed *Israel* to Idolatry, which is Spiritual Harlotry, therefore his Wife shall be an Harlot.

2 He had destroyed those that were Gods Children by external profession, therefore his Children were destroyed.

3 He made his Goods his God, and was all for gain, therefore now he shall lose all.

4 He that had polluted Gods People, shall now dye in a polluted Land. He that would not follow the true God to his Salvation, shall follow false ones to his own destruction.

2 *Silencing and persecuting of Gods faithful Ministers is a God-provoking Sin.* (*Thijs*. 2. 16.

Thou sayest, Prophecie not, what follows? therefore thy Wife, thy Children, thy State, thy Self, and the Land of thy Nativity shall smart for it. Now, if *Amaziah* paid so dear for endeavouring to silence one faithful *Amos*, what may they expect who doe actually blow out many burning and shining Lights? &c. let such remember *Pashur*, *Jer*. 20. 2, 3, 4. and the men of *Anathoth*, *Jer*. 11. 21, 22, 23. and *Jeroboam* the first with his withered hand, which was smitten for stretching it forth against the Prophet, 1 *King*. 13. and *Elimas* the Sorcerer, who was smitten blind for opposing the truth, *Acts* 13. 10, 11. never any man hardned himself against God, especially in this kind that ever prospered, *Job* 9. 4. *Amaziah* had many other sins, as Idolatry, Superstition, Coverousness, &c. but this Persecuting of *Amos* was his fatal sin, and ruined both him and his.

3 *Wicked Parents bring a Curse upon their Posterity.*

God oft punisheth the sins of the Fathers upon the Children, to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate him, *Exod*. 20. 5. & 34. 7. *Deut*. 28. 18, 32, 41. *Jer*. 29. 32. See more in *Caryl* on *Job* 5. 4. p. 200. and *Hieron*, on *Exod*. 34. 7. & in my *Com*. on *Mos*. 13. ult. p. 80. and *Dr. George* on *Heb*. 11. 28.

Lam. 5. 7. the seed of evil-doers shall never be renowned, *Isa.* 14. 20.

4 *Goods ill gotten seldome prosper.*

*Male parta male dilabuntur.*

Treasures of wickedness profit not, *Prov.* 10. 2. *Amaziab* had scraped much wealth together, but his enemies became his heirs. And so it is with many Usurers, and oppressing Cormorants, who treasure up riches for their enemies.

5 *Marriage is lawful in Ministers as well as others.*

The Apostle tells us, that Marriage is honourable not only in some, but in all sorts and degrees of men, *Heb.* 13. 4. *Marriage is honourable* ἐν παντί *in all men*, and God himself hath appointed it for the comfort of all degrees, *Gen.* 1. 28. & 2. 18. and bids him that cannot contain, marry, *1 Cor.* 7. 2, 9. none can vow that which is not in his owne power; but continency is the gift of God, *Matth.* 19. 11. all cannot receive this saying, and therefore not only *Amaziab* here, but the Priests and Prophets in the Old Testament had Wives; *Zachariah* the Priest hath an *Elizabeth* to his Wife, and shee descended of the Daughters of *Aaron*, *Luke* 1. 5. *Jeremiah* was the Son of a Priest, *Jer.* 1. 1. and *Hophni* and *Phineas* the Sons of *Eli* the Priest, *1 Sam.* 1. 3. and *John Baptist* the Son of *Zachariah* the Priest; yea many of the Apostles had Wives, as *Peter*, *Philip*, *James*, and *Barnabas*, *Mat.* 8. 14. *Acts* 13. 2. Saint *Ambrose* affirms, that all the Apostles were married save *John* and *Paul*, and the Apostle expressly saith, that he had power to marry as well as *Cephas*, *1 Cor.* 9. 5. and he allows a Bishop to have one wife, *Titus* 1. 6. It is one mark of Antichrist to maintaine that Doctrine of Devils, in forbidding the marriage of Ministers, *1 Tim.* 4. 1, 3.

See this Point largely and learnedly debated. *Pro et contra*, by Mr. Bell in his survey of Popery Part

3. *Char.* 2. p. 218, &c. *Grævius* peccat Sacerdos: si uxorem ducat, quoniam si domi concubinam procreat. *Cyprian.* *Enchirid.* cap. 17. *Propos.* 9.

*Hist. Tripart.*  
*lib.* 2. c. 14.  
*Rossia. Hist. Eccles.* lib. 10. c. 4.

This Prohibition of Marriage hath filled the VVorld with VVhoredome, Sodomy, Bettiality and Incest, and therefore *Paphnutius* a famous Primitive Confessor, though himself were unmarried, yet mightily perswaded and prevailed with the *Nicene* Council, that they should not decree any thing against Priests Marriage.

The moderate sort of Papists have allowed of Priests Martriages,

Marriages, as Gratian, Panormitan, and others, even *Tellar* mine himself confesseth, that there is no Precept in the Old or new Testament against Ministers marriage; and we in England are bound to bless God for the married Clergy. How many other eminent Lights is this Church furnisht withall, from the pious and reverend Clergy-men of this Land. It is a choyce Mercy to a Land, when the Lord shall raise up from amongst our selves *Nazarites* to serve in the Sanctuary, *Amos* 2. 11. See Mr. Chauncy

*Copula sacerdotum, nec legalis, nec Evangelica, nec Apostolica auctoritate prohibetur. Gratian. Q. 26. S. 2. B. Har. de Clericis, l. 1. c. 18.*

his Ser. on Amos 2. 11. printed 1655.

*Caut.* Yet as all persons, so young Ministers especially should not be rash and hasty in their Marriages, but should get a competent Library first, and some gravity and solidity, that they may be able to walk exemplarily before their Flocks, and that they may not dishonour this honourable Ordinance of God, with any levity or vanity.

[For the lawfulness of Ministers Marriage, see B. Hall, Epif. 3. Dec. 2. and his Treatise stiled, *The Honour of the Married Clerg.* Zegedin loc. com. p. 444. Davenant. Determ. Quest. 43. Perkins 2. Vol. Demonstr. of the Problem, p. 574. Mornay de Missa. l. 2. c. 8. Erasmus Tom. 5. p. 513. D. Willes. Synopf. Papif. Error 83. p. 291, &c. and Mr. Fox Martyrolog. Vol. 2. p. 464, &c. See more in the Index of the *Book of Martyrs*, in the word *Marriage*. B. Morton Protest. Appeal, lib. 1. c. 2. Sect. 32. p. 38. ad 46. Ames. Bellarm. enervat. Tom. 2. l. 3. p. 131. Osiand. Enchirid. Controv. contra Pap. Q. 21. p. 417. ad 456. Parans in 1 Cor. 7. Q. 5. col. 448. Gerard. Loc. Com. Tom. 6. col. 369. ad 434.

### CORONIS.

*Hic presentis Historia sit usus, ut Amasias, qui hodie sibi in Ecclesia dominium vendicant, caveamus, & constanter retineamus vera fidei confessionem, quam ex Dei verbo didicimus. Gualter.*



22  
6

AN  
 EXPOSITION,  
 WITH  
 Practical OBSERVATIONS  
 UPON  
 The Eighth Chapter of *Amos*.

VERSE 1, 2, 3.

*Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto mee, and behold a basket of Summer fruit.*

*And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, a basket of Summer fruit. Then said the Lord unto mee, The end is come upon my people of Israel; I will not again pass by them any more.*

*And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God, there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.*



He Lord having tryed many conclusions upon this people, and used all means to reclaim them, but in vain; he therefore sends the Prophet to them, to declare their final ruine, which he doth in this Chapter by the vision of a basket of Summer fruit, noting thereby the ripeness of their sins, and their nearness to ruine.

The Prophet had before set forth the Judgments which  
 M m m were

were coming upon this people, by three Types and Visions. 1. By the Type of *Grazhoppers and Locusts*, hee did shadow out the famine, chap. 7. 2. By *fire*, devouring the great deep, is set forth War, chap. 7. 4, 5, 6. 3. By a *Plumb line*, is set forth the overthrow of the Kingdome, and the Kings house, chap. 7. 7. 4. We have here a fourth Vision, where by a basket of Summer fruit, is set forth the final destruction of the ten Tribes. So that in this chapter we have the summe of Amos his sixth Sermon, wherein is a Type propounded and expounded, Or 1. A *Commination* of the total overthrow of the Kingdome of Israel, set forth under the type of a basket of Summer fruit, *vers. 1, 2, 3.*

2. Here is an *Amplification of this Commination*, the better to awaken these secure sinners, set forth by a particular enumeration of those dreadful Judgements, both corporal and spiritual, which were coming on them, and that in so dreadful a manner, that the Sun should be darkened, and no light of consolation appear. The Land should tremble, and every one mourn bitterly, as for the loss of an onely Son, *vers. 7.* Desolation like an overflowing flood should run over all, *vers. 3.*

Their feasting should be turned into fasting, and their prosperity into deplorable misery. This is set forth, 1. *Metaphorically*, *vers. 9. I will cause the Sun to go down at noon.*

2. *Plainly*, *vers. 3, to 13. I will turn your feasts into weeping, and your beautiful Virgins and strong young men shall perish.*

3. Their Pastors should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine of the preaching of the Word, it should be so scarce, that it was not to be found, *vers. 11, 12.* They had loathed this Mannah, and now they should be made to know the worth of it, by the wanting of it.

4. Utter destruction, *vers. 14. They shall fall and never rise up again.*

3. Here is the ground of this Commination, or the Impulsive and meritorious cause of all this sorrow, *viz.* the sins of Israel, as 1. Their oppression of the poor, *vers. 4.*

2. Their covetousness and greediness after gain, counting all time lost that was spent in the service of God, because it brought no present profit, therefore they say, *When will the New-Moon be gone?* *verse 5.*

3. Their

3. Their deceitful dealing, in falsifying weighs and measures, *vers. 5.*

4. Their Idolatry, *vers. 14.*

VERSE 1.

*Thus hath the Lord God shewed unto mee, and behold a basket of Summer fruit.*

**T**HE Prophet begins with a Vision or Parable, which contains the substance of the whole Sermon, by a lively type he sets forth *Israels* utter ruine; and to procure the more authority to what he spake, he begins with his usual preface, which he prefixt before his former Visions, *chap. 7. 1. 4. 7. Thus hath the Lord shewed mee.* The Lord the God of *Israel*, whose name is *Jehovah*, the onely true God, who cannot deceive, nor be deceived; he is the Author of this Vision, I am but the Penman and rustick Instrument to declare it to you, *2 Pet. 1. 21.*

In the Verse it self, we have, 1. An *Exordium* or Preface, *Thus hath the Lord shewed mee, q. d.* I bring you no Vision of mine own brain, but what I tell you I have received from the Lord, the Vision I had from him, and therefore in his name do I require attention.

2. Here is a note of Attention, *Behold*, which is here an *Eye-Ecce*, though oft in Scripture it be an *Ear-Ecce*, calling upon men to hearken; yet here 'tis an *Eye-Ecce*, and calls upon them to see a Vision, so 'tis used, *John 1. 29, 47.* This word *Behold*, like the hand in the Margin of a Book, points to some notable thing, and is like the sounding of a Trumpet before some famous proclamation, or the ringing of a Bell before an excellent Sermon.

3. Here is the Vision to be attended and observed, and that is, *A basket of Summer fruit.* Amos saw a basket of Summer fruit, After all the Visions means and menaces which the Lord had given them, he adds yet this, *Of a basket of Summer fruit*, if at last he might work upon their hard hearts. By this sacred Hieroglyphick, the Lord typifies the manner of *Israels* end, and shews it to the Prophet in Vision, the better to affect both Prophet and People.

*Rapit, affatis, i. e. est vorum fructum, qui affate matuerunt, et jam decepti sunt. Mos. Adjuncti, Tempus pro his qua sunt in tempore ut videre est. 2 Sam. 16. 1. Isa. 16. 9.*

A basket of Summer fruit is quickly ripe; as the great heat of the Sun doth more speedily ripen fruit, so the great means and mercies which this people did enjoy, hastened the maturity of their sin, and made them as the Rod of an Almond-tree, which blossometh before other trees, *Jer. 1. 11, 12.*

When fruit is ripe and gathered, 'tis a sign that Summer is past, and Winter is at hand; so this Vision did shew that the Winter of a final overthrow was nigh to the ten Tribes.

The word which we render *Basket*, the Vulgar render it, *Ucinus*, an *Hook*, wherewith we get the fruits which are past our reach, from the tops of trees. 'Tis true, the word is *Homonymous*, in the Original, and admits of divers significations, as a *Basket*, a *Hook*, a *Cage*; but most properly it signifies a *Basket*; though there is a truth in all these, for as the *Hook*, pulls down those Apples which are ripe, with ease, and brings the boughs to our hands; and as ripe fruit in a *Basket*, or birds in a *Cage*, *Jer. 5. 27.* are easily carried whithersoever the owner pleaseth; so the *Israelites* which were ripe for ruine, should be easily and suddenly carried away out of their own Land by the *Assyrians*, as appears, *2 King. 17.*

*Relat. canis-  
trum, ucinus,  
causa.*

### OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The Servants of God must persevere in their Ministry, notwithstanding peoples obstinacy.*

The Prophet had preached five Sermons before; and though We must press he were affronted by *Amaziah the Priest*, and accused of sedition, and advised to fly and be gone, that so the Kingdome might be shut of him; yet he goes on in his duty still, and adds a sixth Sermon to the rest, and publisheth another Vision to his former Visions, if by any means he might reclaim them. The barrenness and baseness of a people must not make us barren, *Ezek. 2. 3, 6, 7. 1 Cor. 9. 16.* but by an holy Antiperistasis; the more vile our people are, the more zealous must we be for God; as *Elijah* was in the midst of an Idolatrous Generation. If men be hardened in their sins, and oppose the truth, we must harden our fore-heads against their oppositions, and set our faces as a flint against them, as our Saviour did, *Isa. 50. 7.* and *Jer. 1. 18.* Yeelding to the wicked in their wickedness, makes them more Tyrannical and violent

We must press  
the same thing  
again and a-  
gain *Hardy*,  
*1 John 2. 9. p.*  
*163, 164.*

violent. Wee must therefore add Sermon to Sermon, and Precept to precept, *Isa.* 28. 13. If one blow, or one woe will not awaken sinners, we must add seven more, *Mat.* 23. 13. to 29.

2. 'Tis lawful in weighty cases to use a Preface before wee speak.

The Prophet here begins with a *Thus hath the Lord shew-<sup>v. Psal. 82. 2.</sup> ed mee*, to quicken their Attention. But of this else-<sup>Obs. 1. p. 9.</sup> where.

3. Ministers must preach plainly to their people.

Hence the Lord so oft useth similitudes by his servants the Prophets, *Isa.* 5. 1, &c. *Jer.* 2. 21. *Ezek.* 17. 6. *Mat.* 13. 13. 15. <sup>See more in my</sup> *3. &c.* and condescends to our capacities by setting forth <sup>Conn. on Hof.</sup> *Visions, signs and sights* before his Prophets, for the better instruction of his people, *Numb.* 12. 6. & 24. 4. *Isa.* 6. 1. *Jer.* 24. 1, 2, 3. *Ezek.* 1. 1. & 8. 3. *Dan.* 1. 17. & 2. 19. *Amos* 1. 1. & 7. 1, 4, 7. *Zach.* 3. 1. In those Visions the Lord revealed himself in an extraordinary manner to his Prophets, yet so clearly and certainly, as if they had seen the things presently fulfilled, which they fore-told; hence they were called *Seers*, 1 *Sam.* 9. 9. And though these Visions and Revelations be ceased in our daies, yet in these Gospel-daies he hath spoken to us by his Son, *Heb.* 1. 1, 2. and hath given to us a *more sure* word of Prophecie, both for perspicuity and certainty, because 'tis both written and sealed, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19.

4. Ministers must preach nothing to their people but what they have received from the Lord. Of this see before, *Amos* 4. 1. <sup>Obs. 3.</sup>

5. Matters of moment must bee marked.

Therefore the Lord sets a *Behold* here upon this Vision, and questions with *Amos* about it, the better to excite him and his hearers to the due observation of it. Wee are all dull and slow of heart to beleeve the holy things of God, and had great need of quickning.



## VERSE 2.

*And he said, Amos, what seest thou? and I said, A basket of summer fruit, then said the Lord unto mee, the end is come upon my people Israel, I will not again pass by them any more.*

**I**N the precedent Verse we had the Type propounded, in this Verse it is expounded.

The better to awaken both Prophet and People, and to quicken their attention,

1 The Lord questions with the Prophet, *Amos, what seest thou?* Questions and Colloquies are more lively, and make a deeper impression than plain positive assertions; hence the Lord so often useth them, *Amos 7: 8. Zach. 4: 2. & 5: 1.*

2 Here is the Prophets answer, *And I said, a basket of summer fruit.* This was the Vision which the Lord shewed him, what these ripe fruits were, whether Cherries, as some affirm, or Figs, as others; or Pears, Plumbs, Grapes, as others; or Apples, as *A Lapid* labours more subtilly, than solidly to prove by eight Analogies, it is not material for us to know; it is sufficient that they were summer fruits, gathered towards the end of summer, when fruits ripen, and even fall into the hands of the gatherer.

3 Here is the Lords explanation of this Vision, *Then said the Lord unto me, the end is come upon my people of Israel.* There is an elegant Paronomasy between the two Hebrew words, *viz.* that which signifies summer fruits, and that which signifies an end; they both sound much alike, so that the one may easily put us in mind of the other; the ripeness of their sins, of the nearness of their ruine.

*Rapin, estas;  
Ketz, finis.*

The Lord had tried all means and medicines, both as a Father, and a Physician to cure this people, but since they were incorrigible and incurable, he now resolves to trouble himself and his Prophets no more with them, for now he intends utterly to destroy them, *The end is come.* Hypocrites and presumptuous sinners are wont to promise themselves a longer time still, No (saith the Lord) you are ripe for ruine, and therefore now you shall reap the fruit of your owne wayes, I will

will bear no longer with you; but as ripe fruit falls of its own kind with ease, so shall this people drop into the mouth of the *Assyrian*, now that the term and time decreed by God for their final overthrow is come. As men gather ripe fruits into their Baskets, and then eat them, so shall the cruel and greedy *Assyrian* devour and destroy those rebellious Sinners who are ripe and ready for destruction, and therefore the Lord adds,

*I will not again pass by them any more.*

The like expression we have, *Amos 7. 8. 9. d.* I will not spare them, nor pass by their sins any more, as I have done. So *Micah 7. 18.* the Lord is said to pardon and pass by the sins of his people; but these had so provoked him, that he would no longer defer the punishment of their iniquity. They had enjoyed a long summer of peace and prosperity, which instead of ripening their Graces, had ripened their Vices, and therefore now the Lord resolves to make a final end with them, and utterly to consume them from the face of the earth.

As if the Lord had said, *The cry of their sins is so great; that I can no longer forbear them, but I will execute my justice upon them without any inclination to mercy, which they have so greatly abused; it is true, I have formerly plucked off some of their fruits, and have destroyed some of their people; but now I will come with a basket, and gather all that grows upon Israel; and will make such an end of this gathering, that there shall be no more of this kind left for hereafter.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sacred and Majestick Rhetorick* becomes the Ministers of Christ.

A vain, light, frothy, flourish of words is below the Ministers of Christ, but a grave, solid, serious finding out of acceptable words, the better to work upon the affections of people, becomes our calling. Hence the Lord himself here useth an *Erotetis*, a *Paranomase*. &c. Metaphors, &c.

2 *When the Sins of a People are ripe and full, God will no longer spare them.*

He lets the wicked fill up the measure of their iniquity before he destroys them, *Gen. 15. 16. Joel 3. Nah. 3. 12, 13. Revel.*

*No. ad corum impietates n. tra. commovere, nec impunitas praeterire. Mercet.*

See more, *Amos 6. 1. Obl. 1. & Camero in Mat. 18. 8. p. 114, 115, 116. folio.*

*Revel. 14. 18.* Though he bear long yet he will not alwayes bear, but when sin is come to maturity, he will cut it down with the sickle of his wrath, and will recompence his patience with the fierceness of his fury; and then though *Noah, Job,* and *Daniel* should stand before him for such a people, yet they could not prevail, *Ezek. 14. 14, 20.* nor preserve them from ruine, *Jer. 16. 5. Lam. 4. 18. Ezek. 5. 11. & 7. 5, 6. Nah. 1. 8, 9.*

*Q. But when are a people ripe for ruine?*

In my Com. on  
Hof. 13. 16. p.  
109, 110.

*A.* I have shewed at large elsewhere, viz. when the multitude, magnitude, strength, growth, impudency, and obstinacy of peoples sins are come to the height, then is a peoples downfall near; when no Preaching, no Praying, no Judgements, no Mercies can better a People, but they fall away more and more, and grow worse and worse, it is a most certain sign that sin is ripe, and that people nigh to ruine.

*3 God will not spare his own people when they rebel against him.*

Though *Israel* be his People, and in Covenant with him, yet if they walk not up to the terms of the Covenant, God will cast them off, and bring an end even upon *Israel*, for so saith the text, *The end is come upon my people of Israel.* People are apt to sooth themselves up in their Priviledges, and to think that their Prerogatives should save them from wrath, but in vain, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
Hof. 13. 5.  
Obf. 3. & 4.

#### VERSE 3.

*And the Songs of the Temples shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God, there shall be many dead bodies in every place, they shall cast them forth with silence.*

**T**He Prophet goes on to amplify the greatness of the approaching Judgements, the better to awaken them; to this end he tells them, 1. That the Songs of the Temples used at their sacred Solemnities, and Divine Service should cease, and be turned to howling and lamentation for the miseries that should come upon them. This *Howling* notes the greatness of the grief, and the height of horreur which should surprize them; they should not only weep for the calamities which should come upon them, but they should weep till they howl again

again for anguish of spirit. Hence when sore Judgements light upon a people, we read of howling, wayling, and weeping joyned together, *Iſa.* 15. 3. *Jer.* 4. 8. *Ezek.* 21. 12. *Hſ.* 7. 14. *Micah* 2. 8.

Q. But what is meant by the Temple here ?

A. The word ſignifies both a Palace, and a Temple ; and therefore ſome render it, *The Songs of the Palace ſhall be howlings*, q. d. thoſe Palaces and great Houſes of the great ones, which have been hitherto filled with Mirth and Muſick, ſhall be now filled with weeping and howling. The Septuagint and the Vulgar miſtaking the word *Scirot*, *cantica*, render it, *Cardines & laquearia Templi ſtridebunt*, but the word ſignifies a Temple, as well as a Palace; and by it here is meant not ſo much the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, (which was not deſtroyed till a conſiderable time after) but the Idolatrous Temple of *Bethel*, where the golden Calves were, and other high places where they had ſet up Idols; for though this Prophet doth ſometimes glance at *Judah* and *Jeruſalem*, yet the primary bent of his Prophecy is againſt *Samaria*, and the ten Tribes, as appears, verſ. 14. *I will puniſh thoſe that ſwear by the ſin of Samaria*, which was not farre from *Bethel*, againſt whoſe Idolatry *Amos* ſo much inveighed, *Amos* 7. 13.

2 There ſhould be ſo great a Mortality of all ſorts and Sexes, that many ſhould dye by the Sword, Plague, Famine, Captivity, and other Judgements, every word hath its weight.

There ſhall be dead Bodies, many dead Bodies, many dead Bodies in all places, and theſe ſhall be caſt out with ſilence, i. e. they ſhall caſt them into common pits, and bury them without lamentation, or any funeral ſolemnity. The word *Has*, *Tace*, *Sile*, is the ſame with *Amos* 6. 10. *Be ſilent*. Some give the ſame ſenſe of the word as they do, *Amos* 6. 10. he that buries the dead ſhall ſay to him that helps him, *Be ſilent*, not a word, for God is juſt in all that he hath brought upon us for our Apoſtaſie and Idolatry. So the word is uſed, *Amos* 5. 13. & 6. 10. *Hab.* 2. 20. *Zeph.* 1. 7. *Zach.* 2. 13. or elſe thus, Throw theſe dead bodies into pits and ſay nothing, leſt we be ſequeſtered as unclean by the Law.

*Rab* *happager*, multiplex, cada-ver, i. e. multa erunt cada-vera, multi occidentur. It is a kind of Apoſiopieſis, when men are angry and troubled, ſo that they curtail their words: many dead bodies in every place, i. e. there ſhall be many dead bodies in every place. See my Schools-Guard on that figure.

3 Here is the time when all this misery should fall upon them, viz. *In that day*, i. e. in the day of *Israels* final overthrow.

4 Here is the certainty of all this, *Dixit Dominus, The Lord*, who cannot lye, *hath spoken it*.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The joy of Idolatrous worshippers shall end in sorrow.*

They may feast, and fiddle, and sing for a time, and walk in the light of those sparks wch themselves have kindled, but this they shall have at Gods hands, *they shall lye down in sorrow*, Isa. 50. ult. God hates both them and their singing, and will turn their songs into howling, *Amos* 5. 23. Superstitious persons are apt to think that God is delighted as they are, with Musick, Singing, and a little formal sacrificing in the Temple, but the Prophet tells them, such carnal joy shall end in howling. The Lord had given them a little success, and they conceived presently that they were highly in Gods favour (for wicked men are apt to measure Gods favour to them by present enjoyments and outward prosperity) and therefore they goe to singing (as Papists now use to doe) in their Temples, yet with self-respects; hence the Prophet thunders out wrath and Judgement against them; for those that will not sincerely sing to God in a time of grace, shall be forced to howl in a time of wrath. Those that will not serve God with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, shall serve him in sadness of heart in the want of all things, *Deut.* 28. 47, 48. In *Nebuchadnezars* time neither Princes, Priests, nor people would serve God in that far Land which he had given them, therefore they were made Slaves to their enemies, *Neb.* 9. 34, 35, 36, 37. So *Psal.* 106. 39, 40, 41, 42. when they fell from God to Idols, he sold them into their enemies hands for a prey. When the Gospel comes with tenders of grace to a people, and they reject them, such shall be slain, *Luke* 19. 14, 27.

2 *Sin brings Gods sore Judgements upon a people.*

See more in my  
Com. on Hof.

It brings Sword, Plague, Famine, *Ezek.* 14. 21. which lay  
13. 12. Obf. 1. heaps upon heaps, and sweep away thousands in a short space;  
& 13. 13. Obf. so that there are many dead bodies in all places. Sin makes men  
8. & 13. 16. fall and fly before Gods Judgements, as leaves before a  
Obf. 6. mighty

mighty wind, *Isa. 64. 6.* See more before on *Amos 4. 10. 8c*  
6. 9.

3. Want of decent burial is reckoned as a temporal Judgement upon the wicked.

They shall cast them out with silence, and none shall make lamentation for them, as they usually did in those daies. But of this at large, on *Amos 6. 10.*

### VERSE 4, 5.

*Hear this yee that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the Land to fail,  
Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? &c.*

**T**He Prophet having set forth the calamities which were coming upon *Israel*, hee now comes to set forth the ground and cause of these calamities, and that was,

1. Their oppression, cruelty, covetousness, and unrighteousness towards men, *vers. 4, 5, 6.*

2. Irreligion and Idolatry towards God, *vers. 5, 14.* They had broken both Tables, both high and low, and that with an high hand, against great light and love, and therefore the Lord resolves now to root them out. And because secure sinners, (especially great men) are apt to flatter themselves, and to think themselves priviledged, and that God loves them because he dorch not presently punish them, therefore the Prophet by an Apostrophe turns his speech unto them, and that he might the better awaken them, he begins, as oft before, with an *Audite hoc*, *Hear this*, O yee brutish men that swallow up the poor and needy. Hear and fear those threatnings which I denounce against you from the Lord, *vers. 2, 3.* Awaken at last, and see what dreadful destruction is at your doors, that by unfained repentance ye may prevent it.

In this Verse we have 1. The Prophets Alarm to drowisie sinners, *Hear this.*

2. Here are the parties alarumed, and these are primarily, the tyrannical, oppressing Rulers of *Israel*: 3. The inferiour sort, who sinned in their degree, and had their peculiar sins as well as others; These covetous Cormorants are here set forth



Paraphrastically, by their greedy devouring of the poor. *O ye that swallow up the needy, that pant and gape as almost wind-les after them, Amos 2. 7.* getting their goods, eating their flesh, drinking their blood, and making them live so slavishly, that their life was but a lingring death; and this they did by laying heavy burdens upon them, partly by Bribery and Usury, partly by racking their Rents, and by inhauncing the rate of food and other necessarie things which they had ingrossed into their own hands; and so made the poor to spend what they had, and for meer necessity to become their slaves.

*Sbraph, absorbere, deglutire, anbelare, ardentius cupere.*

*Hasthuaphim e-bion, absorben-tes egenum.*

*Ad abolendum mansuetos ser-va. Montan.*

*Guanave, mansuetos, modestos, pauperes.*

The word in the fountain signifies to scoop up, to devour, and earnestly to pant after a thing; As a thirsty man swallows down drink with abundance of eagerness and delight; or as the Whale and great beasts swallow the little ones up at a bit, *Gen. 37. 20. & 41. 21.* So did these cruel, covetous Harpys devour the poor without any pity or compassion, *Job 5. 5. & 7. 2. Psal. 36. 2. & 57. 4.* The participle of the Present Tense, notes the constancy of their cruelty, they were alwaies devouring, it was their very Trade to press upon the poor.

3. Here is the height of their cruelty; they so oppress the poor, that they were not able to subsist. *They make the poor of the Land to fail.* They used all means to dispatch and destroy them out of the Land, that so they might live alone in the Earth.

*Object. But sure they were some wicked men whom they used thus.*

*Answer.* No, they were the afflicted; meek and lowly of the Land. The meek and modest poor are exposed to many miseries and injuries of mighty men, these cannot resist, and so become a prey to them, *James 2. 6. & 5. 6.* as little fish do to the great ones. Unreasonable creatures know whom they may be bold withall, and so do oppressors; A Crow will stand on a Sheeps back, and pull off wooll, they durst not be so bold with a Woolf or Mastiff.

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1. Men are very deaf and hard of hearing; especially when they are told of their sins.

And therefore the Prophet begins with an Emphatical *Hear ye*.

*See this.* They were deaf, and loath to attend, because they had no desire to attend. Sinners have so many shifts, and their deceitful hearts finde out so many evasions, that the Lord is fain to bid his Prophet cry, and cry aloud, that all may hear and be awakened out of their deep sleep. So *Isa.* 58. 1.  
*Micah* 6. 9.

2. *Ministers must not stick to reprove great men when they are great sinners.*

They must cry with the Prophet, *Hear this O ye Rulers.* They do more mischief by their evil example, and therefore the Prophet begins with them; besides, they set their hearts as the heart of God, *Ezek.* 28. 6. and think themselves above reproof, and above controul, and therefore the Lord will have his Prophets reprove them, that they may know they be but men.

3. *Oppressing of the poor is a crying sin.*

It provokes the Lord to a controversie with a Land, *Hos.* 1. 1, 2, 3. and makes him swear their ruine, as here, *vers.* 14. 'Tis an eating up and devouring of men, *Psal.* 14. 4. *Micah* 3. 2, 3. and therefore oppressors are called, Dogs, Wolves, Bears, Lions, &c. (as I have shewed elsewhere) 'Tis a death far more mercilefs than present slaying, as hanging in chains alive is worse than beheading.

4. *Wicked men are all for themselves.*

They devour the poor, they swallow up the needy, they destroy their habitations, they inclose all, that they may dwell alone in the earth. A woe is set upon the head of such, *Isa.* 5. 8. such coverous Cormorantes destroy all; In the body natural, if some members should draw all the nourishment to themselves, the whole body must needs perish. Piety makes men publick-spirited, and to seek the good of others as well as of themselves, *Act.* 13. 36. *Philip.* 2. 4, 29, 30. but Impiety is all for self, *Phil.* 2. 21.

5. *Poor men many times are meek and humble men.*

The word *Gnani*, which we render afflicted and poor, signifies also humble and meek, *Zach.* 9. 9. As riches usually make men cruel and proud, so afflictions make men humble and meek. 'Tis not sufficient that men are humbled passively, against their wills, but they must be humble, actively; nor low, but lowly. Our poverty and affliction should drive us

out of our selves to God, *Psal.* 12. 5. 1 *Pr.* 8. 23. Happy are those that are not only corrected, but thus taught by them, *Psal.* 94. 12.

## VERSE 5.

*Saying, when will the New-Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that wee may set forth Wheat, making the Ephah small, and the Shekel great, and falsifying the ballances by deceit:*

*Interrogatio indignantis & optantis, q. d. nimium diu durant feriae. Piscat.*

*V. Hospinian. de Orig. Fessor. c. 4. mibi p. 15.*

*See more in weemse on the Ceremon Law chap. 22. p. 100.*

**I**N the two subsequent verses the Prophet shews how they devoured the poor, viz. by their unrighteousness and covetousness, which appeared in that they were so greedy of gain, that they thought all time lost which was spent in Gods worship, because it brought no present, visible profit with it; and therefore they angrily cry, *When will the New-Moon be gone, that wee may sell Corn? &c.* God had set apart many festivals in the time of the Law for his own worship, but especially the weekly Sabbath, and the New-Moons; hence we finde them so often joyned together in Scripture, *Isa.* 1. 13. & 66. 23. *Hof.* 2. 11. *Col.* 2. 16. Though they had many other solemnities, yet those came about but seldome, as once a year, or the like, and therefore they did not so oft molest them as these did; hence they exclaim principally, and by name against these frequent feasts. The *New-Moon* was the Calends or first day, and beginning of every month, and was consecrated to the Lord. It signified that all the seasons and months of the year are made holy and good unto us. On these *New-Moons* the Priests called the people together by sound of Trumpet to the holy Assemblies, *Numb.* 10. 10. *Psal.* 81. 4. and spent the time religiously in Prayer, Hearing Gods Word, and other holy exercises, 2 *King.* 4. 23. 2 *Chron.* 2. 4. & 8. 12, 13. *Neh.* 10. 33. *Ezra.* 3. 5. *Ezek.* 45. 17. At this solemnity was offered in sacrifice, two young Bulls, one Ramme, seven Lambs, three tenth deals of floure, *Numb.* 28. 11, 10. 16.

In this verse we have the covetous mans character set forth to the life, where we may see 1. His Irreligion towards God; He is a violator of Gods Sabbaths, at least in his affection, which denominates the man. The duties of Gods Sabbath

are

are a burden to him, he longs to have them over, he thinks such daies come too thick, and that they hinder his profit, and therefore he prophanely cries, *When will they be gone?*

2. Here is their oppression and unrighteousness set forth four waies; 1. *They corrupted the measures*, they sold by a small measure, yet made the price great. *They diminish the Ephah*, and made it small, contrary to the Law, *Levit. 19. 35*, 36. It should have been a just measure, neither too big, nor too small, *Ezek. 45. 10*. The Ephah was the tenth part of an Homer, containing about an English Bushel, *Levit. 5. 11. & 19. 36. 1 Sam. 1. 24. & 17. 17. Isa. 5. 20. Ezek. 45. 10, 11*. 'Twas an usual known measure of dry things amongst the Jews; as the Bath was of liquid things, under it by a Synecdoche all other measures are comprehended; for as St. James saith of the Commandements, he that breaks one, breaks all habitually and disposicively; so he that makes no conscience of corrupting one measure, will make no conscience of corrupting them all when a temptation comes. He that will falsifie an Ephah, I will not trust him with an Homer, which was the greatest measure of dry things, which the Jews had, containing about ten Bushels, *Ezek. 45. 11*.

2. A second branch of their Oppression was, *Their making of the Shekel great*, before they curtailed the measure, and now they heightened the price; thus they ground the Poor as it were between millstones, the upper was the small Ephah, and the lower was the great Shekel; they used great weights, to weigh the money which they received for payment; for the Shekel was partly a peece of money, and partly a weight, By the *Shekel* here is meant the weight of the Shekel, the common, ordinary Shekel was in value about fifteen pence, and the Shekel of the Sanctuary two shillings six pence, as you may see, *Gen. 23. 15; Josh. 7. 21. 1 Sam. 17. 5, 7. & 2 Sam. 21. 16. 2 Chron. 3. 9*. As under the Ephah was comprehended all kinde of measures. so under the *Shekel* is comprehended all kind of weights by the like Synecdoche; for he that is unfaithful in that which is little, will be unfaithful in that which is much. In those daies they did not count their money, but they weighed it. Now, at-

them, See *Wicse*

*Siclus fuit moneta certi ponderis, & omnium ponderum regula. 'Twas the weight of all things ponderous, and commonly weighable amongst them. See Wicse*

Vol. 1. page 142. in *fine lib.* though

though the measure was little, yet the price of the Corn was great; they gave light measure, but heavy weights, when they came to pay their money, contrary to Gods express commandment, *Deut. 25. 13, 14, 15. Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small, &c.*

3. Yet more, *They falsifie the ballances by deceit*, Either in weighing money, or other commodities, or as the Original runs, they pervert the ballances of deceit, *viz.* by making those which were right deceitful. They falsified the weights, the better to defraud others. They raised themselves out of other mens ruines, and got profit by their disprofit. Thus they gained, whether by right or by wrong, they cared not. *Rem, Rem, quocunque modo rem.* They must have money, 'tis no matter how.

*Onivert, per-  
vertit, curvita-  
tem quandam  
& perversita-  
tem deviantem  
à recto denotat.*

4. They were not onely deceitful, but cruel too, *vers. 6.* they bought the poor for things of nought, and made slaves of them; before they got their Money, Lands and Estates (for in time of famine men will part with all for bread) and now they get the men too; and (which aggravates their sin to the height) they did not onely corrupt their measures, and falsifie their weights, but their wares too. *They sold the refuse of the Wheat;* They sold the chaff, refuse and base commodities, yet made them pay for good ones. No wonder if the Lord swear their destruction, *vers. 7.*

The summe of all is this, *When shall we have done with these solemn Feasts, and times allotted for publick worship, wherein we are forbidden to buy or sell? would to God these New-Moons and Sabbaths were once over, that wee might sell our Corn at an high rate, making the measure of the Wheat small, and the weights (wherewith the silver is weighed) great and heavy, thus falsifying the sail by deceitful weights.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Worldly men are weary of Gods worship.*

See more in  
Mr. Trapps  
Com. on Amos  
8. 5.

They think every hour ten, and every day a year, which hinders them in the pursuit of their worldly profits and pleasures. Their wealth is their treasure, and their money their God; and therefore Sabbaths to them are tiresome, tedious things, because they favour not the things of God, but the things

things of the world. These snuff at Gods service, and cry, What a weariness is this? *Mal. 1. 13.* their bodies may be in the Temple, but their souls be in the Stable, or Barn, plodding on their gain and increase. They are somewhat a kin to that Heathen, which complained of the Christians for losing a seventh part of their time in keeping Gods Sabbaths. This shewes the woful depravation of our natures, that can sit at a Play, or the like prophane meeting, a whole day without weariness; when Gods Worship, which should be our joy, is tedious and irksome, and we can hardly sit out an hour without sleeping; which shewes our grosse insensibleness of those Spiritual blessings revealed in the Gospel. But a gracious soul, who knowes what it is to enjoy communion with God in his Ordinances, calls the Sabbath *his delight*, and looks upon it as the best day in the Week, and esteems it an honourable day, *Isa. 58. 13.* because it brings him in great treasure. Those times which bring a man in great profit, are valued most. Rich men think not the time lost in which they are counting money; so a gracious soul so long as it hath incomes from God is greatly delighted, and longs to meet with God again, and therefore cries with *David, Oh when shall I come and appear before the Lord in Sion? Psal. 43. & 84.*

2 *Greedy worldlings are never at rest.*

These Muck-worms are alwaies seeking after gain, *Amos 2. 7. Hab. 2. 13.* so eagerly are they set upon it, that if they lose but an hour they think it ten. They are never well but when they are fingering of Money, serving Mammon, and laying up Treasure, *Luke 12. 17, 18, 19.* and this brings them into temptations and snares, and many hurtful lusts, which drown men in perdition, *1 Tim. 6. 9, 10.* Lust is a furious thing, like *Jehu* it drives fiercely and furiously, *Jer. 2. 23, 24, 25. 1 Cor. 12. 2.* it will not let men rest worke-day nor Holy-day; all is one with these greedy Mammonists, their Money is their god, and whatever hinders them in the pursuit of it, is a great burden to them. This makes them cry here, *When will the New-moon be gone that we may sell corn?* and this greedy lust puts them likewise upon Lying, swearing, Usury, Bribery, Perjury, Forgery, and what not? so sad it is to be in thrall-dome to a lust; there is no rest nor peace to such wicked ones, saith the Lord.



3. *We must not confound the Worship of God only to the Sabbath-Day.*

God enjoyed the *Jews* New-Moons, and other Festivals wherein to Worship him, as well as on the Sabbath. At those seasons they resorted to the Prophets to be instructed in the ways of God, 2 *King* 4. 23. *Ezek.* 46. 1. especially when the Priests were dumbe and idle. The Sabbath-Day is the chief time to seek after knowledge, yet he appoints other seasons also; and if Ministers must preach in season and out of season on the Lords Day, and the Week day, as occasion requires; then surely people ought to hear at such seasons: and therefore it was Prophefied of Gospel-times, that Gods people should then be willing in that day of Christs power, *Psal.* 110. 3. and shall be constant and frequent in his Worship, *Isa.* 66. 23.

See more in my  
Com. on 2 Tim.  
4. 2. p. 326.

4. *Unrighteous dealing in our civil Commerce is very displeasing unto God.*

He loves righteousness, but hates unrighteousness, *Psal.* 11. ult. and therefore so oft forbids it, *Levit.* 19. 11, 33, 36. *Deut.* 25. 13, 14, 15, 16. *Ezek.* 45. 10, 11. and tells us, that false weights and false ballances are an abomination to him, *Prov.* 11. 1. & 20. 10. & 23. 11. *Amos* 8. 7. *Hos.* 12. 7. and that he will be avenged on such as defraud others, 1 *Thes.* 4. 6. They shall not reign long here. *Ezek.* 22. 27, 28. *Micah.* 2. 2, 3. nor come into Gods kingdom hereafter, *Psal.* 15. 1, 2. 1 *Cor.* 6. 8, 9.

See more in my  
Com on 2 Tim.  
3. 3. p. 81, 82.  
Mr. Loves Di-  
rectory, on  
1 Cor. 7. 30.  
Ser. 8. 9. p. 65.  
Perkins on Mat.  
7. 2. p. 199.

#### VERSE 6.

*That yee may buy the poor for Silver, and the needy for a pair of Shoes; and sell the refuse of the wheat.*

THE Prophet goes on, and sets forth another kind of cruelty used by these deceitful men; and that was, buying of the poor. This was the end of their fore-going fraud and unrighteous practices. *viz.* that they might drive the poor into those straits, that they should be forced to sell themselves as Slaves and Bond-men for a little silver and support. Those greedy ones had got their Purses before. and now have at their Persons, they will make Drudges of them.

In this Verse we have, 1. The object of these Cormo-  
rants

rants cruelty, and that is the Poor. It is not the Rich, for the Famine feldome pincheth them. Neither is their aime at the poor mans Goods and Cattel ( for these they had got before ) but now their aime is at their persons ; though they were their brethren, and fellow Citizens, yet having them at a bay now Corn was dear, they resolve to make Merchandize of them, and to buy and sell them at very low rates,

See the words, *Dal, and Ebion, tenuis & egenus*, opened at larges in my Com. on Psal. 82 3. p. 106, 108.

2 It is not simply the Poor, but the Righteous, humble, honest, innocent poor which they thus oppress, *Amos 2. 6. They sell the righteous for silver.*

*Humilem pro calcamentis*  
*Verbo Arabic.*

3 Here is the price which they give for these poor, and that is base and contemptible, *it is a little Silver, or a pair of shoes.* So *mos 2. 6.* there they sell the righteous ( as here they bought them ) and his righteous cause for money, and the poor that could not bribe them *for a pair of shoes.* The Lord permitted the *Jewes* in some cases of casual poverty to buy their poor brethren, but they most cruelly abused the Law, to the oppressing and grinding of the poor and needy, *Levis. 25. 39, 40.* whereas the Lord commanded, that though their poor Brethren were sold to them or had sold themselves, yet they should not deal harshly or rigorously with them, as they did with Slaves, but civilly and tenderly as with brethren. This buying and selling of the poor *for a pair of Shoes*, notes the base estimation that worldlings have of poor righteous men, in that they buy and sell them at such mean, low, and sordid rates, even for the basest necessities, for worthless things of little price.

*Pro pari calcamento um, i. e. oro rebus vilissimis;*  
*1. Quia vili est maner.*  
*2. Quia sine ulla se impendit comparatur;*  
*3. Quia Pulvere & fimo.*

*ut quia, in ore qua exaltantur perpetuo pedibus, neque unquam eleventur de fimo. Hieron. in locum.*

4 To their former fraud they now adde another, that so they might fill up the measure of their sin. *They sell the refuse of the Wheat.* Before they corrupted and falsified their Weights, and now they corrupt their Wares. They sell the Chaff or falling off of the Wheat ( as it is in the founrain ) that is, they sell to the poor in their great necessity that which is Horse-mear, and Hogg-mear, rather than Mans-mear, even the refuse, offall, and rai-end ( as we say ) which is mixt with Chaff, Cockle, light-corn, little-stones, and dust.

*Mappal bar, de cidaum tritici, i. e. purgamenta & quisquiliae, quae de cribro dum concutitur, decidunt. Sanctus.*

This refuse which is not marketable, and is seldom sold, but is usually given to Beasts or Birds, yet these Muckworms sell this Muck for pure Grain to the Poor, who were necessitated to buy this, or starve, and make them pay as if it were good corn.

This accumulated cruelty, makes the Lord to swear their ruine in the next verse.

## OBSERVATIONS

1 *Worldly men are very industrious for Mammon, and riches.*

They move every stone for the attaining of it, and care not how they come by it, whether by right or by wrong; on the Lords Day (though their hands be tied, yet) their hearts are on it, and on the week-days: 1. They get false Weights. 2. False Wares. 3. They enhance the price of those Wares. 4. They get not only the poor mans Purse, but his Person too. Thus they that will be rich fall into many snares and temptations of the Devil, which drown men in perdition, 1 Tim. 6. 9, 10. and if men be so violent for earth, what should we bee for Heaven?

2 *Life is a precious thing.*

See more in M.  
Caryl on Job  
2. 4.

Men will sell their Cattel, their Cloathes, their Children, yea themselves for food to preserve life, Gen. 47. 20, 23. 25. Nehem. 5. 2, 3, 5. so true is that, Job 2. 4. *Skin for skin, and all that a man hath, will he give for his life.* It is a Proverbial speech, some by skin understand a mans cloathing, which at first was made of Skins, Gen. 3. 21. 9. d. a man will part with his Cloathes rather than with his Life, for the body is more than raiment, Mat. 6. 26. 2. Others by *Skin for skin* understand riches, goods, and all the outward estate, which are like a Skin to cover and fence us from poverty and misery; but life is better than all these, and hath been greatly prized by good men, Gen. 32. 11. Hest. 7. 3. and bad men, Gen. 25. 32. Hest. 7. 7. Ecclef. 9. 4.

3 *Covetous men are cruel men.*

They buy and sell not only Cattel, but men, Neh. 9. 37. yea righteous men, they sell the righteous for silver, and condemn the just for a reward, Jam. 5. 6, any thing for money. Sell a

Boy

Boy for a Lust, and a Girl for a cup of Wine, *Joel* 3. 3. Some men will transgress for an handful of Barley, or a morsel of Bread, *Ezek* 13. 19. Thus the poor alwayes pay for it, especially the meek and modest poor; men are apt to goe over the Hedge where it is lowest, and to catch the poor by drawing them into their Nets, *Psal* 10. 9. that is, into their Debt-books, that they may mortgage all unto them; and at last become their slaves and bond-men. As the good man considers the case of the poor and needy that he may be the fitter to releve him, *Psal* 41. 1. so these mercilesse men consider the poor, that they may devour him.

4 *Men may not debase a Commodity, depriving it of its primitive goodness, and then sell it for the best, at a full value.*

Corn-masters may not cull out the best Grain, nor mingle their Grain with refuse, and then sell it (as they did here) for the best. We may not mingle Wine with Water, nor Drosse with Silver, but whatever we would that men should doe to us (in equity and justice) even so must we doe unto them.\*

5 *The world hath a very mean esteeme of the godly.*

They value them no more than their old Shooes, and therefore they sell the righteous for a pair of Shooes; as if any contemptible rate were good enough for them. See how different the judgement of this wicked world is from the Judgement of God. The world esteeme the godly as the drosse and dung, the filth and off-scouring of the world, *1 Cor* 4. 13. but God esteemes them as the glory of the world, *Isa* 4. 5. the only excellent ones of the earth, *Psal* 16. 3. he thinketh them too good to live in this wicked ungrateful world, *Heb* 11. 38.

See my Com.  
on 1 Tim. 3. 3.  
p. 113, &c. and  
Mr. Burroughs  
on *Psal* 16. 3.  
See Mr. Fea-  
wells Ser. on  
*Heb* 11. 38.

6 *Cruelty ends in misery.*

God threatens these Men-sellers, and Men-devourers with dreadful Judgements, *Amos* 2. 6. & 8. 7. *Luke* 16. 24. See more be-  
*James* 2. 13. Though the poor bear it, yet God will not al-  
wayes bear it at their hands, but swears he will be avenged on  
them, for so it follows.

See more be-  
fore on ver. 4.  
Obf. 3.

## VER. 7.

*The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, surely  
I will never forget any of their works.*

**W**EE are now come to the Third Part of this Chapter, where the Judgements of God both Corporal and Spiritual are more fully set forth unto us.

1 The Prophet shewes the certainty of these Judgements, in that the Lord doth not only say, but swear that he will be avenged on them.

2 As they had been great Sinners, so he sets forth the greatness of their Punishment, *It shall overflow the Land like an mighty flood,* ver. 8.

3 As he had shewed the certainty, so he sets forth the suddenness of their sorrows, *Their light shall be turned into darkness, and that at noon-day; their mirth into mourning, and their high prosperity into the lowest misery,* ver. 9, 10.

4 As if all this were not sufficient he yet goes higher, and threatens them with a Famine, not of bread but which is worse, of the Word of God. At Spiritual Mercies are the choicest Mercies, so Spiritual Judgements are the sorest Judgements.

5 Which strikes all dead, He tells them that this their loss should be irreparable. *They shall fall, and shall never rise any more,* ver. 14. We have heard of *Israels* Sin, now follows his Suffering; and lest any should flatter themselves, and think that these Threatnings were but Scar-crows, therefore the Prophet the better to awaken these secure Sinners, brings in the Lord swearing their destruction, *q. d. So sure as I live, (saith the Lord) so sure shall ye dye.* This Oath of God notes both the certainty and immutability of Gods Counsell, and Decree to punish *Israel*; where we have,

1 The certainty of *Israels* ruine, *The Lord hath not only said, but sworn it*; that is, he hath most certainly decreed it, for Gods Oath is nothing else but Gods immutable Decree, severely to punish these cruel Caysses, and Oppressors of the poor.

2 By whom doth the Lord swear? *why it is by the excellency and*

and eminency of *Jacob*; that is, by himself, who is the glory and excellency of *Israel*; and by whose favour and free-election they excelled all the Nations of the world. Other Nations had dead Idol-gods, but it was *Israels* glory above all the Nations of the World, that they had the Lord for their God, and were in Covenant with him. The Lord hereby tacitly upbraids them for their ingratitude, that having such glorious privileges from him, they should yet rebel against him.

Some by the excellency of *Jacob*, understand the Ark, and others the Temple; it is true, these are called, *The glory of Israel*; but since the Lord hath no greater to swear by, therefore he swears by himself, who is here called, *The Excellency of Jacob*, i. e. of his people *Israel*.

The Vulgar leaving the Fountain, and following the corrupt Streams of the Septuagint, render it thus, *The Lord hath sworn against the pride of Jacob*. But the Original is expresse against it, for though the word *Gaon* signifie Pride, as well as Excellency, yet the prefix *Beib*, notes that form of swearing which is usual with the *Hebrews*, as appears *Amos* 4. 2. & 6. 8. and it signifies not *contra*, but *per*, and therefore is fitly rendered, *By the excellency of Jacob*, and not against the pride of *Israel*.

3 What doth the Lord swear? why he swears *he will forget none of their wicked workes*; the words in the Original run thus, *If I forget any of their workes for ever, q. d.* let me not live, or let me not be God, or let me not be accounted true, but repute me for a Liar, if ever I forget to punish this great wickedness of *Israel*, they shall surely pay for it according to their demerits. See the like expression, *Deut.* 1. 35. 1 *Sam.* 3. 14. & 14. 45. *Psal.* 89. 36. *Isa.* 14. 24. & 62. 8. *Ezek.* 34. 8. The Prophet by an Euphemismus omits that open form of swearing, *As I live, or as sure as I am God, &c.* because of the horror and dreadfulnesse of it, and to make us render of using Imprecations, therefore the Holy Ghost oft times conceals the Imprecation in swearing.

This abrupt manner of speaking is usual in Oathes; it is a kind of Apophopesis usual in Scripture, when we cut off some word, or part of a sentence which yet is understood; Such Oathes *cum reticentia* are very dreadful, and set forth Gods greatest

*Big-on, per excellenciam, celsitudinem, gloriam, V. Leigh Crit. Hebr. p. 22. ubi plura. Si, est nota jurantis, & signum juramenti execratorii apud Hebræos.*

*Reticentia est plena affectus & terroris.*



5

*L. in a fac, in fi-  
nem, in eternum,  
in perpetuum.*

greatest Wrath against a People; as *Psal. 95. 11. To whom I swear in my wrath, if they enter into my rest, q. d. They shall never enter into my rest; if ever they come there let me not be God, or let me not be true. It is a very strong Negation, & stronger cannot be expressed. I will never forget any of their works.* It is an Andropopathy, God speaks to men after the manner of men; he is said to remember those sins which hee punisheth, and to forget those sins which he pardonech.

*Any of their works; i. e. None of their works, not one shall be forgotten by me to all eternity, but they shall certainly and suddenly pay for all their crying Crimes committed against mee.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Sin and sorrow are inseparable companions.*

*Flagitium & flagellum*, are like the Needle and the Thread, the one goes before, and the other follows, *Isa. 63. 10. 1 Cor. 10. 8. 9. 10.* we read before of *Israels Sin*, and now we read of his Suffering; and to assure them of it, The Lord swears it. If men will sin against the Lord, let them be sure at first or last their sin will finde them out, *Numb. 32. 23.* Gods Word had been sufficient to assure us of this, but because we are incredulous, he confirms it with an Oath, that none might doubt of it. Ask Men and Angels, Houses, Cities, Kingdoms, and they will all tell you, that it was sin that laid them in the dust.

2 *A People may so far incense the Lord to wrath by their sins, that hee may swear their ruine.*

When *Israel* had long hardned their hearts against God, at last he swears they should never enter into his rest, *Psal. 95. 11.* Patience abused turns into fury, and makes the Lord to swear mens utter rejection, *1 Sam. 15. 28, 29.* this people had highly provoked the Lord, and therefore this is the third time which the Lord swears against them, *Amos 4. 2. & 6. 8.*

3 *The favour and presence of God with a People, is the glory and excellency of a people.*

It is not Corn, Wine, Women, Health, Wealth, or multitudes of people that make a Nation happy, for then *Turks*,  
and

and *Tartars, Barbarians, and Indians* should excell Gods people. for they abound with these external comforts; but *happy is that people whose God is the Lord*, Psal. 144. ult. Hence the Lord is called, *The excellency of Jacob*, and *the Glory of Israel*. He was their inestimable Treasure, and true Honour, who made them truly glorious, Psal. 136. 20. & 148. 14. Jer. 2. 11. Luke 2. 32. Hence *Moses* glories in this above all other Priviledges, That *there was no people that had the Lord their God so nigh unto them in all that they called upon him for, as the Lord our God hath been to them*, Deut. 4. 7, 8. The Wife shines with the rayes of her Husband: Ezek. 16. 14. the fruition and enjoyment of Gods favour is the life of our lives, and the honour of our honours, without this we may write *I-chabod* upon all that we have, *There is no glory*. The greater is their sin then who dishonour him by their sin, who is their real excellency. and turn the glory which he hath put upon them into shame. This makes the Lord to swear that he will strip them of their Priviledges, and make them naked, as in the day when they were born. He will take away not only his Corn and Wine but his Sabbaths, and Sacraments, which are the real glory of a people, and give them to a people which shall yield him better obedience.

*Swears are tremendous and dreadful things.*

They must be taken with abundance of fear and reverence. Hence it is that the Holy Ghost here conceals the Imprecation, implying thereby, that men should tremble at the very thoughts of what will follow if they swear falsely.

5. *God records and remembers all the wickedness of the wicked.*

He forgets none, no not one of their works, though they themselves do. As hee hath a book of remembrance for all the good which his people have done, which shall at the last Day be published to their everlasting praise, Mal. 3. 16. Mat. 25. 34, 35. so he hath a book of remembrance for all the wicked works of the ungodly, which shall be opened at the last Day, and set in order before them to their everlasting shame, Psal. 50. 21. Mat. 25. 41, 42. then shall they give an account of their Stewardship, and must be no longer Stewards, Luke 16. 2. nothing can pass his All-seeing Eye; hee records not some, but All their works; and though he may

See my Com. seem for a time to connive and take no notice of their sins but  
on Hof. 13. 12. less them prosper in their wickedness; yet at last he will  
Obf. 1. make them know that he hath not forgot any of their works,  
when he shall execute his Justice fully upon them.

## VERS. 8.

*Shall not the Land tremble for this, and every one mourn  
that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a  
flood, and it shall be cast out, and drowned as by the  
flood of Egypt.*

**T**He Prophet having in the precedent Verse shewed the  
certainty of *Israel's* punishment, in this Verse he comes to  
shew the greatness and grievousness of that misery which like a  
flood was rushing in upon them. They had been extraordinary  
sinners, and now he tells them of extraordinary sufferings.  
They had their floods of sin, and now follow floods of sorrow.  
The Prophet the better to awaken them begins, 1. With an  
Emphatical Interrogation, which is equivalent to a strong  
Affirmation, as *Amos 5. 10. Shall not the Land tremble for  
this? viz. for this cruelty, cozening, Idolatry, and Apostasy?*  
*g. d. I appeal to your Consciences, how can it be otherwise?*  
it is impossible that such men as have thus perverted all equity  
and order, have brought in confusion, and exercised all man-  
ner of Tyranny and cruelty upon the poor, should ever escape  
unpunished; when the very earth trembles and groans under  
such lewd and rebellious inhabitants.

*Tirgar, a Ra-  
gar contremuit,  
commotus est.*

1 Some make it a Prosopopeical speech, thus, so great is the  
sin, and so great shall be the sorrow of *Israel*, that the very  
insensible earth cannot but tremble and be moved at it; for all  
Creatures by a Natural instinct are sensible of the Voyce and  
beck of their Creator, how much more of his anger.

2 Here is an Exegesis, or explanation of the precedent  
Clause, the earth should so tremble, and there should be such  
trouble and fears there, *that every one that dwells in it should  
mourn.* As all had sinned, so all without exception should  
suffer for sin.

3 He illustrates their Calamity yet further, by the simili-  
tude of an over-flowing flood, which carries down all before it,  
and

and it shall rise up rebellly as a flood. The earth shall rise up as a flood, for, the flood should rise up over it; it is an Hypallage frequent in Scripture, *g. d.* As waters rise up and cover the Land that it doth not appear; so shall the *Assyrians* arise and over-spread the whole Land of *Israel*, and carry away both them and their riches.

And it shall be cast out; As the Sea and Floods doe cast our mire and dirt, which they raise, *Iſa. 57. 20.* So should the Land spue out these; yet more, and be drowned as by the flood *Niſeu*, demer- of *Egypt*; that is, by the River *Nilus*, which by way of eminency is called, *The River*, i. e. that noted and famous River which watered the Land of *Egypt*, making it fat and fruitful. *Niſeu*, in profundum, They shall be swallowed up as in a gulph.

*Israel's* Captivity is here compared to an over-flowing River, which no banks nor bounds can hold. It is usual in Scripture to set forth great Calamities by the name of great Waters; so *Pſal. 18. 16. & 32. 6. & 69. 2, 11. & 124. 4, 5. & 144. 7. Jer. 46. 7, 8. Amos 9. 5.* So the Lord here, the better to expresse the great Calamities which were coming upon *Israel*, fetcheth a Similitude from the River *Nilus*, which was wont yearly to over-flow the Plains of *Egypt*; there was no raine ordinarily in *Egypt*, but the over-flowing of *Nilus* supplied that want, and covered the Plains for about two months space. Now as the River *Nilus* over-flowed all the Land of *Egypt*, and made it like a Sea, so the Land of *Israel* should be swiftly and suddenly over-run with the Army of the *Assyrians*, which like a sweeping flood should carry away all before them; as they did in the reign of *Hofhea*, the last King of *Israel*, when they were carried into Captivity out of their owne Land, *2 King. 17.*

*V. Pliny, Nat. Hist. l. 5. c. 9.*

# OBSERVATIONS.

The very earth trembles and groans under the fins of wicked men.

Wicked men are a burden to the whole Creation, *Pſal. 60. V. Fenner's Ser. 1, 2. Rom. 8. 22.* and could they speak (as they doe tacitly, on *Rom. 8. 22.* and in their land) they would say, Lord let us not be Servants to those that will not be Servants to thee. The earth cries, let me devour them, as I did *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram*, *p. 296. folio.*

*Numb.* 16. 31, 32. The Sea cries, Let mee drown them; the Air saith, Let mee choak them. &c. Thus all creatures are ready to testify their indignation against sin and sinners, and therefore the Lord calls so oft upon the inanimate creatures to be ashamed and astonished at the rebellion of his people, *Isa.* 1. 2. *Jer.* 2. 12. As a man, whose stomach is surcharged, is sick till he hath vomited up that which burdens his stomach; so the creature is even sick again till it have spued out those wicked inhabitants that burden it, *Levit.* 18. 25. & 20. 22. Now, shall the insensible creatures groan for our sin, and shall not we groan for our selves? shall they be affected with our wickedness, and we be insensible? God forbid.

2. *Wicked men are the troublers of Israel.*

See my Beauty  
of Holiness,  
ch. 7. Obj. 11.

The world is apt to charge Gods people with rebellion and troubling of *Israel*. As *Ahab* did *Elijah*, and *Amaziah* the Priest did *Amos*, chap. 7. 10. and the Jews the Apostles, *Acts* 17. 6. But tis the wicked that are the true Reshagnims and troublers of the places where they dwell, *Jer.* 4. 28. & 9. 12. 13. *Hos.* 4. 3. 'Tis the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Cheater, &c. that are the true troublers of *Israel*, and make the Land to tremble under them.

3. *Floods of sin bring floods of sorrow.*

Where floods of Idolatry, Atheism, Security, and Unrighteousness go before, there floods of misery ever follow. In the old world there was a deluge of sin, which brought upon them a deluge of water, which swept them all away. God hath variety of floods to sweep away impenitent sinners from the earth.

4. *When Judgements come, they seize on rich men as well as on others.*

When the flood of Gods judgements comes, every man shall mourn, without exception. Not one of these covetous Cormorants shall escape; their silver and their gold shall not avail them in the day of Gods wrath, *Prov.* 11. 4. *Ezek.* 7. 19, 27. *Zeph.* 1. ult. The sin of such Oppressors, cries, and rests no more till it hath brought plagues upon the heads of such sinners, *Ezek.* 16. 49. & 22. 7, 13. *James* 5. 4. Thus as they had sinned universally, so now God brings upon them universal destruction.

VERSE 9.

*And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day.*

**W**EE have seen *Israels* sin and sorrow in part, here we have it more fully amplified. 1. Their prosperity shall be turned into misery, and their mirth into mourning, *vers. 9, 10.*

2. They shall lose their Pastors and their Preaching and shall have a famine of spiritual food sent amongst them, *vers. 11, 12.*

3. Then follows utter destruction, *vers. 13, 14.*

The Prophet Allegorically sets forth under elegant Metaphors, the greatness of that sorrow which was falling upon *Israel*; *Their light should be turned into darkness*, their joy into sorrow, their prosperity into adversity, their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation, as for an only Son.

*Israel* had enjoyed a little gleam of prosperity which they thought would alwaies last, they thought this Sun would never set, nor this light ever be darkened, but the Lord tells them, he would suddenly send the Army of the *Assyrians* upon them, when they little dreamed of it. so that their Sun should set at noon, and the light be turned into sudden darkness.

Some take the words literally, that the natural Sun should set at noon, but the Prophet speaks not of natural, but metaphorical darkness *viz.* of the night of adversity, as appears by that which follows, *I will darken the earth in the clear day*, what's that? why I will turn your feasts into mourning, &c. *vers. 10.*

Others apply this Text to the Passion of Christ, when the Sun was eclipsed, and darkness covered the face of the whole earth. But this is quite against the Text and Context, which speaks of the destruction of the Kingdome of *Israel*, and not of the sufferings of Christ.

In the verse it self we have 1. A dreadful judgement threatened in metaphorical terms, *I will cause your Sun to go down at noon, and will darken the earth in the clear day.* The same



thing is set forth in various terms, the better to affect them. By *Light and the Sun at noon*, is meant great prosperity and gladness, as 2 Sam. 23. 4. Hest. 8. 16. Job 18. 5, 6. & 38. 15. Psal. 97. 11. & 112. 4. By *darkness* is meant, great sorrow, terrour, captivity, and fear. So Job 22. 10, 11. Isa. 59. 9, 10. Jer. 15. 9. Amos 5. 18. Micah 3. 6. Psal. 107. 10. Lam. 3. 2. Hence the doleful condition of the damned in Hell is called by the name of darkness, *Math. 22. 13*.

2. Here is the time when this shall be, and that is, *in that day, viz.* when the Lord shall come to execute judgement upon *Israel*, for all their provocations, and bring the Army of their enemies upon them.

3. Here is the certainty of all this misery, *Dixit Dominus*, The Lord, who cannot lye, hath spoken it. Let the wicked have never so much light of prosperity, let him shine as bright as *Lucifer*, yea as the Sun it self, which is the fountain of light, yet his light shall be put out in obscurity, and down he shall, *Jer. 14. 13*. The higher men are in their own conceits without God, the more suddenly and surely shall they fall.

The summe of all is this, *q. d.* 'Tis true O yee people of *Israel*, that yee are now at the height of your peace, and at the high-noon of your prosperity, now you are secure and flourishing by reason of those victories which you obtained under *Jeroboam the second*, who restored what was lost to *Israel*: now you trust in your Riches, Success, and Armies, and never once think of a fall, or that your Sun will set; but since I have spared you for a time, therefore you conclude that your judgements will never come, but I will bring sudden calamities upon you (*saieth the Lord*) and such as you looked not for, so that your mid-day of prosperity shall be turned into the midnight of adversity; your peace into war, your plenty into penury, and your liberty into restraint: you shall be stript of all by the merciless *Assyrian*; and you that were but now the head, shall suddenly be made the heel: The Sun of your prosperity shall set in obscurity, without the least glimmering of light, or hope of deliverance.

See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 16.  
p. 148.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. All our afflictions come from God.

'Tis he that makes our Sun to set at noon, when we are most

most careless and secure, and little think of night. 'Tis I, I, I, that create light and darkness, *Isa. 45. 7.* There is no evil of affliction in the City but the Lord doth it, *Amos 3. 6.* Hence they are called *His* Judgements by a special propriety, *Isa. 26. 8, 9.* and he is said to bring spoilers and sudden terrors upon his people at noon-day, *Jer. 15. 8, 9.* See Mr. Brinsly in his Treatise of Passive Obedience.

2. *The wicked may enjoy for a time a great light of prosperity.*

It may be noon and clear day with them; They may prosper even to envy, *Psal. 73. 2, 3, 4.* *Jer. 12. 1.* *Hab. 1.* But this at large elsewhere. See my Com. on *Psal. 73. 18.* &c.

3. *When the wicked are in highest prosperity, the Lord can suddenly bring upon them a night of adversity.*

When people are drunk with prosperity, and think their mountain so strong, that it can never be moved, then God usually hides his face, and we are presently in trouble, *Psal. 30. 7.* In our own dayes we have seen those that have been upon the highest pinnacle of temporal felicity, suddenly brought into an Abyss of misery. Before the day of judgement, when men are most secure, crying, Peace, Peace, then comes sudden and swift destruction. Be not then puffed up with success, or prosperity, nor yet envy the triumphs of the wicked, for they shall soon come down, and wither as the grass, *Psal. 37. 1, 2.* *Rev. 18. 7, 8.* Walk humbly and thankfully in the midst of all enjoyments, do not fight against God with his own favours, nor abuse his blessings to his dishonour; if you do, you must know, that he who raised you, can as easily ruine you; and he that makes it *noon* with you, can as easily make it *night*. Let us therefore with holy *Jab, cap. 3. 25.* in our highest prosperity, fear and fore-see a day of adversity. Let us become as an obedient people, and then our Sun shall never set, but we shall enjoy Gods favour without interruption, *Isa. 60. 20.* See Mr. Bellars his Sermon on *Isa. 60. 20.*

## VERSE 10.

*And I will turn your feasts into mourning, and all your Songs into Lamentation, and I will bring up Sackcloth upon all loyns, and baldness upon every head; and I will make it as the mourning of an onely Son, and the end thereof as a bitter day.*

**W**Hat the Prophet had spoken metaphorically and darkly in the precedent verse, he comes and explains it in this. He had told them before that their Sun should set at noon; what's that, may some one say? why in plain English, *Your feasts shall be turned into mourning, and all your songs into lamentation.*

The Prophet goes on still in setting forth that sudden and sad distress which should surprise *Israel*, and because wicked men are slow of heart to beleeve Gods threatnings, therefore he multiplies words, and expresseth the same thing in various terms, the better to awaken them, and work upon them.

In the two fore-going verses we had six *Ands*, and in this verse we have six more, which serve as so many links to fasten the chain of Gods judgements together. Where wee have 1. A further explication of the judgement threatned, *viz. a turning of their feasts into mourning, and their songs into lamentation.*

*Quest. But the Question will be, what songs and feasts doth the Prophet here speak of, whether be they sacred or prophane?*

*Ans.* Both, 1. The Lord would turn their common feasts where they had prophane singing and musick, into weeping and wailing, *Amos 6. 5, 6, 7.*

2. Their holy Feasts and Temple Songs, and Musick, in which they so much delighted, and thought that with such Ceremonious, external worship God was well pleased, these did but increase Gods wrath, and blow up the fire of his displeasure against them, and therefore the Lord threatens that these songs especially should be turned into howling, *vers. 3.*

The Jews had many festivals, and in them God commanded them to rejoyce, *Deut. 12. 18.* They had also holy Musick, and holy songs at those festivals appointed by *David*, for the praising

ing of God, *1 Chron. 25*. But they being Idolaters, Superstitious, and hypocritical, resting in a bare external performance of these Ceremonial Rites, and placing all holiness in them, though themselves lived lewdly and licentiously, *Jer. 7. 8, 9, 10, 11*. Sacrificing to the Calves; and not to God; therefore the Lord threatens to turn even those religious feasts and songs (for of these the Prophet seems more especially to speak) into mourning and lamentation, *q. d.* *Hitherto you have lived secure and careless, feasting and singing without any fear of God, or thoughts of his judgements; but now (saith the Lord) I will turn your feasting into fasting, and your songs into lamentation.*

2. Here is the greatness of their sorrow, set forth by two Ceremonial Rites, which were used in those Eastern Countries, viz. *Sackcloth and Baldness.*

1. *Sackcloth* was a coarse mourning garment, made of black Goats hair, bound with a girdle about their loyns. 'Twas a sign and symbole of misery and mourning, as appears, *Gen. 37*. See more in *Mr. Greenhill* on *Ezek. 7. 18.* *34. 2 King. 6. 30. Psal. 30. 11. Isa. 3. 24. & 25. 3. & 22. 12. Jer. 4. 8. & 48. 37. Lam. 2. 10. Ezek. 7. 18. Joel. 1. 8.* At *Ahners* funeral *David* commanded them to put on Sackcloth, and weep, *2 Sam. 3. 31.* And *Ahith* bearing of Gods judgements coming on him, he humbled himself in Sackcloth, *1 King. 21. 27.* The two witnesses were clothed in Sackcloth, mourning to see so many fall away to Popery, *Rev. 11. 3.* The Lord threatens to make them put off their ornaments and gorgeous attire, *Exod. 33. 4, 5.* and put on sackcloth and mourning weeds, as most suitable to such mournful times. They would not humble themselves nor mourn in their prosperity, now they should be humbled, and made to mourn in their adversity.

2. *Baldness* also was a sign of the greatest mourning among the Jews, and therefore the Lord threatens here that he would bring baldness upon every head, that is, their miseries should be so great, that they should pluck off the very hair of their heads for anguish and sorrow: for the Jews, when they were in deep distress, did testify their sorrow, as by sackcloth and rending their garments; so by Baldness also, either pulling the hair off their heads for very anguish and indignation, as *Ezra* did *Ezra 9. 3.* or else shaving their heads and beards,

as *Job* did when he heard that his children were dead; this he did, not out of impatience, but according to the custome of those times and Countries, to express the greatness of his sorrow, *Job* 1. 20. So *Isa.* 3. 24. & 15. 2. *Jer.* 7. 29. & 16. 6. & 47. 5. and 48. 37. *Ezek.* 7. 18. and 27. 31. *Micah* 1. 16. The hair of the head and beard is counted an Ornament, and the cutting it off was a debasement, and therefore it was used onely in cases of very great sorrow. Though they might not conform themselves to the Heathen, who shaved their heads, and then dedicated their locks to Idols, *Levit.* 19. 27, 28. *Dent.* 14. 1. yet in sorrow for sin, and deep distress, it was commanded, *Isa.* 22. 12. *Micah* 1. 16.

3. Here is the universality of this calamity, it shall seize upon all *loyns and every head*, none shall escape, but as all had sinned, so all should now suffer for sin.

4. Here is a further Amplification of their sorrow, drawn from the Example of one that mourns for the death of an only Son, which is wont to be very bitter and great. The Prophet seems to be at a stand, as here, whence to borrow comparisons, to set forth the greatness of their sorrow. A Father which hath many children, disperseth his love among them all, but he that hath but one only Son, his love is united, and is more vehemently set upon him: hence, *Unice amare est vehementer amare*, and the Philosopher saith, the strongest love is between two, not twenty; for if it be divided amongst many, 'tis lessened and weakened; as a River that is cut into many channels. When Parents lose one of many, it troubles them, but yet they comfort themselves that they have others left still, but if they have but one only Son, and he dye, to bury all their hopes in one only hopeful childe, is very bitter, and causeth great lamentation. Hence great sorrow in Scripture is thrice compared to the sorrowing for an only Son. 1. In the Text, then *Jer.* 6. 26. where the Prophet calling upon the people, to make most bitter lamentation for the great calamities which were coming on them, hee calls on them to *mourn as for an only Son*.

So *Zach.* 12. 10. When the Jews shall be converted and called, 'tis said; *Then shall they look upon him whom they have pierced, by an eye of Faith, and then shall mourn for him as for an only Son*, that is, in an high degree and measure. 'Tis a kinde

of Proverbial speech used by the Heathen. Hence that of Tully, Cicero pro Roscio Amerino. I mourn (said he) for the misery of the Common-wealth, as a Mother doth for her only Son.

4 Here is the duration of this misery, it shall endure to the end of the Kingdome of *Israel*, and extend it self to their posterity. *The end thereof*, viz. of the Land, which is put for the inhabitants of the Land, by a frequent Metonymy, *shall be as a bitter day*; that is, as a funeral, mournful day, because they shall be destitute of all true comfort from the VVord of God, which alone can keep us from perishing in our troubles, *Psalms 119. 93.*

The Prophet seems to prevent an evasion, and stop a gap at which impenitent sinners are wont to creep out; oh (say they) though these troubles be sharp, yet they will be but short, they are clouds that will soon vanish; but deceive not your selves (saith the Prophet) for the VVrath of God shall abide upon you, and upon your Posterity even to the end; and when one wave is over, another shall come, till it have swept you all out of your owne Land.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Plain preaching is the best teaching.*

The Prophet in this Verse expounds his Metaphors and allusions, and makes them plaine for the meanest capacity. But of this elsewhere.

See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 15.  
Obf. 1.

2. *What is dark in one place, the Scripture makes plaine in another.*

What was spoken mystically, *vers. 9.* is explained *ver. 10.* But of this elsewhere. Schools-Guard Rule 5.

3. *Carnal joy ends in sorrow.*

As they that sow in godly sorrow shall reap in joy; so they that sow in carnal joy shall reap in sorrow. When men abuse their feasts and lawful liberties, God will turn them into fasts and mourning, *Hof. 2. 11. Amos 5. 16, 17. & 6. 5, 6, 7. & 8. 3.*

How sad then is our condition, for if the Lord turn the feasts of his owne appointment into lamentation to a back-sliding people; what may we expect who are mad upon the *Saturnalia, Bacchanalia, & Floralia* of the Heathen, Festivals which God



never once instituted or ordained, wherein men drink, dance, dally, and give themselves up to all manner of debauchery and prophanesse, and that in dayes of such glorious light, as the Nation never enjoyed the like since it was a Nation; shall not the Lord visit for these things? he will suddenly and certainly send some *Assyrian* or other to avenge the dishonours done to his name. If the Lord will turn holy Feasts and Songs into lamentation, what will he doe to those that use prophane and filthy Songs, to the corrupting both of themselves and others?

4 *When all sin, all must look to suffer for sin.*

When all sin, then all loyns, and all heads must be made bald; National Sins bring National Judgements. VVhen *All* the Old VVorld, *All Sodome*, *All Jerusalem* had corrupted their wayes, then *All* must perish. But of this before.

5 *In calamitous times we may and must expresse our inward sorrow by outward Vestures and Gestures.*

When Gods hand lies heavic upon a people, they must not be stupid and stoical, but they must hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it, *Micah* 6. 9. They must humble themselves under Gods mighty hand, laying aside their costly attire, and put themselves in mourning weeds. It is not sufficient that we grieve inwardly for our sins, and Gods Judgements upon us for sin; but we must also expresse our sorrow by external signs. *David* wept and put on Sackcloth, *Psal.* 38. 11. and so did, *Jer. ch.* 9. 1. and *Nehem. ch.* 1. 4. *Job* abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes, *Job* 42. 6.

*Caut.* Yet a Caveat must be here encred, we must not rest in bare external weeping, or wearing of mournful Vestures; but our outward humiliation must expresse our inward humiliation of the heart, else hypocritical out-side service is odious to God, *Isa.* 1. 11, 12, 13. & 66. 3. *Matthew* 6. 2. *Luke* 16. 15.

6 *Sin is a bitter thing.*

It is bitter in it self, and brings forth bitter effects. It brings bitter dayes, and bitter calamities upon a people; Sin, like *Sathan* its Father makes large promises, but sorry performances. It promiseth pleasure, but yeelds pain; it promiseth liberty, but brings men into prisons; it promiseth peace, but brings warre. Take heed then of the deceitfulness of sin,

7 *When*

See Burroughs  
on Mat. 1. 29.  
r. 691. and M.  
Poole Ser. en.  
*Joh.* 4. 24.

See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 16.  
Obf. 8.

See Books his  
remedy against  
Satan's Devi-  
ces, p. 13. 14.

*Heb.* 3. 13.

*7 When a Nation is ripe for ruine, God will utterly destroy them.*

His patience will no longer wait upon them, but they and theirs shall perish in their iniquity, *and the end shall be a bitter day.* The wicked use to promise themselves light, but they shall finde darknesse; they promise themselves deliverance and joy, but they shall finde bitternesse and sorrow even to the end of their dayes.

VERSE II, 12.

*Behold, the days come saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord.*

*And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it.*

**T**He Prophet had before set forth those sad Calamities, and external Miseries which should seize upon the ten Tribes; he now proceeds, and fore-tells them of farre greater evils which should come upon them, *viz.* not a famine of bodily bread (for of that he had spoken before, *Amos 4. 6.*) but a Spiritual famine of the Word of God, which should feed their souls to eternal life. This is the Judgement of Judgements, usually the last and foret. As the giving of Gods V Word to a People is the choyslest Blessing, so the taking of it away is the heaviest Curse; as having all other Curses attending it. It is a sign of Gods rejecting and reprobating of a people, when he will not vouchsafe to speak unto them by his Ministers. As it is a sign that God hath some people in that place to which hee sends his Messengers, *Acts 18. 9, 10, 11.* so their departure from a place and people is an evident sign of his displeasure against them, *Acts 13. 46. Mat. 10. 14. 15.*

In this Verse we have, 1. A note of Attention, *Behold, q. d.* I shall now tell you of a more direful and dreadful Judgement than ever, and therefore it concerns you diligently to attend.

2. Here is the Judgement threatned, and that is a Famine, which is amplified and illustrated by an Antithesis, it is not an

external, corporal famine, 'tis not a famine of material bread, but which is far worse, 'tis a spiritual famine, a losse of heavenly food, a want of the bread of life; this famine should be so great, that they should run from Sea to Sea, and from one part of the Land to another, and yet should not enjoy it. The Lord in great mercy had sent his Prophets amongst them, to call them to repentance, but they like ungrateful and rebellious sinners contemned Gods Ordinances, prophaned his holy things, and persecuted his Messengers, till the wrath of the Lord broke forth, and there was no remedy.

They loathed Gods Mannah, and longed to be at their Garlick and Onions in *Egypt* again. They were dead under lively Oracles, and barren under fruitful means of grace, and therefore the Lord was now resolved no longer to plow such Rocks; nor sow such sands; but since they would not serve him with gladness of heart in the abundance of all things, therefore they should now be made to serve their enemies in the want of all things. They that would not hear and obey the Prophets of God in their own Land, should now be cast out of all, and be made to serve strange gods in a strange Land. As God had before exalted them to Heaven in the use of means, and given them many excellent Prophets that did fully and faithfully dispense his Word unto them; so now, their Prophets should be taken from them, and they should have a spiritual famine, and be made to know the price of Gods mercies by the wanting of them. The word *Famine*, implies two things,

1. It sets forth the nature of Gods Word, 'tis the food of the soul. Look what bread and water is to the body, that, and much more is the Word of God unto the soul,

2. It imports the greatness of the judgement, it should be a *Famine*, not a famine of bread, that is but a petty-judgement, a flea-biting, as nothing comparatively to this; though the bodily famine simply considered in it self, be one of Gods sore judgements, as I have shewed before, on *Amos* 4. 6. yet that pincheth but the out-side, the carcass, and may bee sent in mercy to the soul: but this famine of the Word is a spiritual judgement that destroies the soul, and is a sign of Gods greatest wrath against a people, and is usually accompanied with many other judgements.

3. Here is the Author of this famine, and that is God, *I will*

*will feed, or I will let it loose, I have hitherto chained it up* *Shalack, misth,*  
like a wilde beast, that it might not hurt you, but now it *emisth, innisth.*  
shall out amongst you and destroy you.

4. Here is the time when this should be, and that is suddenly, *The dayes come, q. d.* The time will come, and is now at hand, when your Sun shall set at noon, and a spiritual famine shall surprize you.

5. Here is the certainty of all this, 'Tis not man, but *the Lord that saith it*, who will fulfil every threatening upon the heads of these sinners.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The preaching of the Word is the spiritual food of the soul,* and therefore the want of it is here rightly stiled a famine.

Man consists of two parts, of Soul and Body, and both these must be fed; the body which hath its Original from the earth, *The body hath its alimentum*  
is maintained by earthly nourishment; but the soul which is *naturale, the*  
spiritual, must be fed with the spiritual food of Gods Word; for *soul its alimentum spirituale.*  
as bread is the stay and staff of mans body, and the body cannot live without it, so Gods Word is the support of the soul,  
and it cannot live without that, hence it is called *Food*, *Jer. 3. 15. & 15. 16. John 21. 15, 17. Act. 20. 28.* 'Tis here, and here only that Christ the bread of life is revealed unto us, *See Mr. Will. Burtons third sermon on Jer. 3. 15. p. 160.*

*John 6. 35. Prov. 9. 1. to 7.* 'Tis in the Gospel that wee have a feast full fraught with spiritual delicacies, *Psal. 65. 4. Isa. 25. 6. & 55. 1, 2.* Hence *David* makes such bitter lamentation for want of it, *Psal. 42. 2, 3. and 84.* and 'tis made one more of Gods people, that they mourn for want of the holy Assemblies, *Zeph. 3. 18. Lam. 1. 4, 7. and 2. 6, 7. and 4. 1. and 5. 18.* *Job* esteemed the word of the Lord *above his necessary food*, *Job 23. 12.* He did not only esteem it above Lands and livings, above gold and silver, but even above his appointed food, without which he could not live. He did more earnestly desire it, more heartily delight in it, and more highly prize it, than he did his necessary food, without which he could not subsist. He had rather lose his usual meals, than lose his opportunities of meditation on the Word of God. Hence us that Gods Ministers are called *Stewards*, *1 Cor. 4. 1, 2.*

*Titus* 1. 7. which must dispense this Bread of Life according to the capacity of their Hearers. They must give Milk to Babes, and strong meat to strong men; for Gods Word is both *Semen & Pabulum*, it is the seed by which we are new-born, *Jam.* 1. 18. *1 Pet.* 1. 23. and the food by which we are nourisht after, *1 Pet.* 2. 2. by this the dead are inlivened, *Joh.* 5. 25. the dark inlightened, *Psal.* 19. 8. and the sorrowful comforted, *Isa.* 40. 1, 2. This shewes the great necessity and benefit of the preaching of Gods Word, and should make us prefer it unto our chiefeest joy. But to this point I have spoken at large in a set Treatise.

Sal Terra.

2 *Contempt of Gods Word brings a famine of the Word.*

The Lord here suites his Judgements to his Peoples sins. He had in great mercy raised up for this people of their owne Sons for Prophets, and taught them (not by strangers) but by Children that came from their owne loyns, yet they ungratefully said to the Prophets, *Prophecie not*; *Amos* 2. 11, 12. and commanded this our plain-dealing Prophet to preach no more at *Bethel*, but to goe see some other Countreies, *Amos* 7. 12, 13, 16.

*Hinc illa Lachryma!* This brought the famine amongst them. VVhen God shall bestow the preaching of the VVord upon a people, which is the choycest gift which he can bestow on the Sons of men, and they shall loathe this Mannah, and vilifie those that bring it; it is time the Lord should cease giving when such gifts are scorned, and cease loving, when his love is contemned. The *Jewes* that stoned the Prophets, killed the Apostles, and crucified Christ; for this great contempr, they have been a people of Gods Curse this sixteen hundred years. When men grow weary of truth, it is just with God that they should be left to error, and when they are weary of a faithful *Amos*, that they should have a flattering *Amaziah*; *When men will not receive the truth in love, God will give them over to strong delusions, that they shall beleieve lyes.* A dreadful Curse! *2 Thes.* 2. 11. q. d. Since I have given them Light, and shewed them my Truth, and the way to Heaven, but they have rejected it; therefore there shall come false Prophets, and shall cry down Ordinances, Sabbaths, &c. and you shall beleieve them that shall set up humane inventions, and you shall follow them. When Children abuse their Bread and play

See more in my  
Comm. on Hof.  
13. 16. p. 89,  
90. and *Deuts*  
Plain-mans  
Path-way, p.  
135. to 154.

play with it, and trample it under feet, it is time for Parents to take it from them. To bring these things *à Test ad Hypothefin*, and to apply this contempt of the Word to our selves, it may make us tremble to think which we are fallen; Since the Apostles times the Gospel never shone so brightly as it doth at this day, and never was it and the Ministers of it more openly vilified, and that by many old Professors (who are turned blasphemers) than at this day; and therefore wee may justly fear that the Lord will punish our abuse of Light with the darkness of Popery; and take his Gospel from us, and give it to a people that shall yeeld him better fruits of it than wee have done. Sad tidings alwayes follow the contempt of the glad tidings of the Gospel; and they that think they have too much Preaching, shall at last have none at all. When *Jerusalem* began to abuse the Prophets, they were quickly made a desolation.

3 *The loss of the Word of God is the sorest losse.*

No famine like this famine, no judgement like this judgement, *Lam. 1. 4.* it is the heaviest that can befall a people on this side *Hell*; which made *Luther* say, *I would not live in Paradise without the Word, but with it I could make a shift in Hell it self.* *David* knew this full wel, and therefore in the midst of all his wants, he was most sensible of this, and begs it as that one thing necessary, that he might dwell in the House of the Lord, *Psal. 27. 4.* It is true, Corporal famine is very terrible, and brings people into sad perplexities, and extremities, as you may see, *Lam. 1. 11. 19. & 2. 12, 20. & 4. 9. & 5. 4. 6.*

See: more before, on Amos

16. but this Spiritual famine is farre worse. For,

1 That and other Judgements pinch but the *body*, but this pines *ubi non est verbum Dei, quid* the *soul*; now as the soul is more noble and excellent than the *nisi ruina & mors, etsi in speciem omnia flo-* body, so its Judgements are farre more dreadful, because *vere videantur?* Spiritual. It is sad when men shall cry for bread, and they have a Stone given them; for meat, and they have a Serpent; for *Mercer.* drink, and their Pastors (or Impostors rather) give them Poyson.

2 That may be a means to bring a man home to God, but this increaseth, and confirms the separation between God and the soul.

3 That kills but the body at worst, but this destroyes *both* body and soul. So that as our Saviour said in another case,



about fearing of men, so may I say, about fearing of famines; Fear not that famine which can but kill the body, but I will fore-tell you what you should fear; Fear that Famine which can destroy both body and soul, yea I say unto you, fear that.

4 Here is a *Thirst* added to the famine, a *thirst of water*. Though God sometimes punisheth Cities with famine, yet they may have water to drink; but if they want both bread, and especially water, the distress lyes very heavy; for *Thirst* if it be in extremity, is one of the most painful and intolerable Passions that is in this life; now the Prophet applyes this to the Spiritual famine and want of Gods Word, *y. d.* if it be a great Judgement to be tormented with bodily famine and thirst; how great is the Judgement then that I denounce against you, who shall have both famine and thirst, and that not of bodily bread or water, but of the Word of God, which is the Bread and Water of Life, and as farre excells all Corporal bread, as the Soul excells the body? And as it is sad to have children cry for bodily bread, and there is none to give them; so it is much more sad when men shall cry for Spiritual bread, and there is none that can or will give it them.

2 As the giving of Preachers to dispenſe the Word unto us is reckoned as *the choicest mercy*, Job 33. 23, 24. Isa. 30. 20, 21. Jer. 3. 15. Ephes. 4. 11. because it brings light in darkness, joy in sorrow, life in death, health in sickness, strength in weakness, and brings us to an interest in God, and having him we have the Mine, the Fountain, All. So on the contrary, the removal of the Word from a people, is reckoned amongst the sorest Judgements, 1 Sam. 28. 6. Psal. 74. 9. Prov. 29. 18. Lam. 2. 9. Ezek. 3. 26. Hos. 4. 17. Micah 2. 6. Mat. 15. 14. dry Breasts are reckoned as a Curse, Hos. 9. 14. for when the Word goes, the greatest Mercies and Priviledges of a People goe with it, Rev. 2. 5.

That Gods presence in his

Ordinances is a 3. and woe to a people when God goes; Hos. 9. 12. then Peoples greatest glory. See Mr. Mayhew's Fast Sermon on 2 Chron. 15. 2. So the Preaching of the Gospel amongst us is our glory, Hag. 2. 9. and if it depart, we may write *Ichabod* upon all our other

See Hildebrandt on Joh. 4. 13. Lect. 9. P. 39. 40.

See Mr. Will. Burton on Jer. 3. 15. Ser. 3.

V. Sal Terra 24P. 3. p. 45.

ther enjoyments, that is, *There is no glory*; for the glory is departed from *Israel* since the Ark of God is taken. It is said of *Constantinople*, that it is fortified with three Bulwarks. 1. VVith Wood, i. e. with Shipping. 2. VVith Stones, i. e. with high VValls. 3. VVith Bones, i. e. with valiant men. But it wants a fourth, *viz.* The presence of God in his Ordinances, without which all other Fortifications are but vain, *Isa.* 22. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. *Nahum* 3. 12, 13. Christ is called a King, *Psal.* 2. 6. & 110. 3. *Zach.* 9. 9. now the presence of a King is the glory of a place; and where he is truly preached, there he is truly present; though the place and people be never so mean. *Vilissimus pagus est abominabile Palatium, ubi est sincerus Pastor, & fideles aliqui. Luther.*

2 The *Protection* of a people goes, Where there is no Vision, there a people lye naked, and exposed to Divine displeasure, and all Gods sore Judgements break in upon them *Prov.* 29. 18. the contempt of the VVord laid this potent and flourishing Kingdome of *Israel* in the dust.

3 *Peace, Plenty, Comfort, Riches, all goe when the Gospel goes.* As the Gospel comes not empty handed to a People, but brings Peace, Plenty, Renown, and Glory with it, *Exod.* 30. 24. (*Isa.* 60. that whole Chapter) so when ever the Gospel goes, these concomitants goe along with it. As we see in *Jerusalem* which lies now in the dust, and the seven Churches of *Asia*.

4 *Salvation* goes, for the Preaching of the VVord is the ordinary means of Salvation. Those that sin away the ordinary means must never look for extraordinary; whom God saves now, he saves by Preaching, *Rom.* 1. 16. 1 *Cor.* 1. 21.

5 VVithout the VVord we cannot grow in Grace, it is not sufficient that we have the truth of Grace, but God looks that we should shew it by our growth in grace, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. & 1 *Pet.* 3. 2.

6 VVithout the VVord *no comfort*, we shall perish in our afflictions unless Gods Law be our delight, *Psal.* 119. 92. It is through comfort of the Scriptures that we have hope, *Rom.* 15. 4.

7 VVithout the VVord we are naked, and cannot defend our selves; it is with this sword of the Spirit that we defend our selves against the assaults of our Spiritual adversaries, *Ephes.* 6. 17.

8. If the Word be gone, we have *no Rule* to walk by, no Star to direct us, and so shall run into the boggs of unwritten Traditions, Revelations, New-lights, and a thousand other-ours. If once we forsake the Law and the Testimony, to walk in the light of our own fire, following our own corrupt reason, we are sure at last to lye down in sorrow, *Isa. 50. 11.*

9. When the VVord departs and goes out, then all *miseries* croud in. *Non datur vacuum*, holds true in Divinity, as well as in Philosophy.

1. Then the Devil sets up his Throne, *Rev. 2. 13.* and wickednesse abounds. VVhen Christs Kingdome goes down, then Sarans comes up; when the Sun sets, night follows.

2. Your children will be *Idolaters*, and you will bring forth children to the murderer; when people have not the true God, they will have a false one.

3. Many temporal plagues will follow, as appears by the two following verses, *vers. 13, 14.* Where the famine of the Word goes before, there Sword, Plague, Famine, and other Judgements usually follow. In *Queen Maries* time, when we lost the Word, we had losses by Sea, and losses by Land, and had such a terrible famine, that the people were forced to make bread of Acorns. When Truth and Gods Ordinances are gone, Vines and Fig-trees will not be long after, *Hos. 2. 11, 12.* When the Lord would make way for his extreamest wrath, to come upon a people, he first takes away his faithful Ministers, that should lye in the breach to intercede for them, that so his wrath may come upon them to the utmost, *Psal. 74. 8, 9. Lam. 2. 7, 8.*

Let us then use all means to prevent this Land-destroying Judgement; to this end, 1. Be humbled for the sins of the times, which call for the removing of our Candlestick out of its place. 2. Besiege Heaven with your prayers, *Mat. 9. 36.* this is an Omnipotent Engine, whereby we conquer God. To quicken your prayers, consider what a sad losse the losse of the Word is, as you have seen in nine particulars before. 3. Walk as becomes the Gospel; if any thing remove the Gospel from amongst us, 'tis our prophane, impure, ungospel-like, loose conversation that will do it.

4. As *corporal*, so *spiritual* famine comes from God.

See Mr. Burroughs on the place. p. 459 &c.

*Est quædam precum omnipotentia. Luther.*

See twelve sins that help to remove the Gospel. *Sangar. Movr. Lett. 9. p. 93, 94 &c.*

As all evil of affliction, so this amongst the rest comes from him.

1. He sometimes sends it *immediately*, when he chargeth the Prophets to prophesie no more in his name. As he commands the clouds to withhold their Rain, and so brings a corporal famine; so when sinners grow obdurate, he commands his Ministers to withhold their spiritual showers, and to let them alone, that they may perish in their iniquity, *Hos.*

4. *57. Mat. 15. 14.*

2. When by death he takes away his Ministers, when people cast dirt upon them, the Lord casts dust upon them, and hides them in their graves from the revilings of men.

2. Mediate, 1. By a corrupt *Magistracy*. Thus *Ahab* and *Jesabel* persecuted the true Prophets, and made them hide themselves in caves. So *Herod* that Tyrant cut off *John Baptist's* head.


2. By a corrupt *Ministry*; false Prophets in all ages have been the greatest persecutors of the true. Thus *Amos* here hath *Amasiah* the high Priest of *Bethel* against him, *Amos 7. 10.* His punishment you may read, *vers. 17.* Thus *Pashur* the Priest smote *Jeremiah*, and put him in the stocks, *Jer. 20. 7.* My Lord *Annas* and *Caiphas* the High Priest, with the Scribes and Pharisees were the greatest enemies to Christ and his Apostles.

3. When men are given up in judgement to their own hearts lusts, so that they stop their ears against the Word, and will not hear, *Zach. 7. 12.*

4. When men muzzle the mouths of these laborious Oxen, *Y. Salter. a.* and ungratefully change their wages, and withdraw the Oil *cap. 8. p. 121.* from the Lamp, and pick the tallow from the weik. 'Tis just with God to starve such souls, as would starve his Ministers bodies; you must therefore buy the Truth, and with the wise men, part with your gold and silver for Christ, *Mat. 2. 11.* You may buy gold too dear, but you cannot buy Christ and his Truth too dear; though you part with all your temporals for the Gospel, you have made a wise bargain, *Matth. 13. 44.*

5. Spiritual *curiosity* and niceness, when men have itching ears, so that they cannot indure sound Doctrine, *2 Tim. 4. 4.* When nothing will down but quails, and picking-meat, they are all for flourishes, and Rhetorical strains, and smoothe things,

things, *Isa.* 30. 26. The doctrine of Mortification and Self-denial will not down with them.

See more on  
Amos 8 11, 12.  
in Dr. Thomas  
Taylors Sermon  
on that Text, in  
his Sermons, in  
folio p. 207,  
&c. 

6. *Barrenness under the means of grace*, when we do not answer Gods cost and care, then he pulls up the hedge, and laies all waste, *Isa.* 5. 1, 2, 3. *Mat.* 21. 43. *Rev.* 2. 3. They that will not work in the day, shall lamenec their folly in the night; they that will not serve God in the injoyment of Ordinances, shall serve their lusts in the want of them. Let us therefore walk in the light, whilst we have the light, when the night comes no man can work.

#### VERSE 13.

*And they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East, they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not finde it.*

**I**N this verse we have a further aggravation of this peoples misery, *viz.* that they should seek what they had despised, and withall they should have a frustration of their expectation. They had contemned the Word of the Lord, and now God in his just judgement will make them know the worth of his Word by the wanting of it. *They shall wander from Sea to Sea.* They shall trouble themselves without any profit. They bared the light, and therefore now they shall sit in darkness; they contemned Gods Prophets, and now they shall not be troubled with them; formerly God sent his Prophets, rising early to seek them, but now since by their sins they had driven both God and his Prophets from them, they should run from Sea to Sea, that is, from the Red Sea Southward, to the Mediterranean Sea VVestward (which were the bounds of the Land of Canaan, *Numb.* 34. 3. *Josh.* 1. 4. *Jael* 2. 20. *Zach.* 9. 10.)

*Ab Aquilone ad ortum, i. e. longissime diffusa loca, & velut è diametro opposita, petent. Merop.*

Yea they should run from North acrosse unto the East, that is, in plain English, they should run all the Land over, and seek the word of the Lord in every corner and quarter of it, and yet they should misse of it. If the famine be but in one part of a land, a man may run to another part of it for aid, but when they shall cry for bread in all the parts of the land, and there is none to give them, that is doleful indeed. Quest.

*Q.* Here a Question will arise, Have not the Lord promised, that those that seek shall have, and they that seek shall find, and such as hunger and thirst shall be blessed, how comes it then to passe, that this people seek the Word of the Lord, and yet cannot finde it?

*A.* The Answer is easie, there is a two-fold seeking and thirsting.

1. A seasonable, serious, and sincere seeking after God in his Worship, and to such the Promise runs, that they shall finde, *Prov. 8. 17.* God never sayes to the genuine seed of *Jacob*, Seek my face in vain, *Isa. 45. 19.* This Spiritual hungering and thirsting after the sincere milk of the Word, that we may grow thereby, is an infallible evidence of grace.

2. There is a formal, feigned, late seeking of Gods Word, *Luke 13. 24.* only in the time of trouble, when pain oppresseth them; such may seek, but they shall never find: and thus it was with *Israel* here, they sought not the Word out of any love to it, nor yet to be converted by it, but being in trouble, and seeing (when it was too late) what a blessing they had lost, they now howl after it, as those did for bodily food, *Hos. 7. 14.* and as *Esau* did for the Birth-right, when it was too late, *Heb. 12. 17.* So these in a blind, erroneous, distracted manner desired to hear the Word of the Lord from the mouth of the Prophets, not to be instructed by it (for they hated to be reformed) but to get some ease and comfort from them in their distresse; for the Prophets were wont to mingle comfort with their Threatnings, and to tell the people of God how long their troubles should endure, and when they should end, *Psal. 74. 9.* But since the Lord spake to them by his Prophets in their prosperity, and they would not believe, that so they might fly from the wrath to come; now they should sink under their burden, and run to and fro for a Prophet of the Lord to comfort them, but they should not have it; for as the Lord called and they would not answer, so they should now cry, and should not be heard, *Prov. 1. 24. 25, 26, 27.* So that it is a fallacy to argue thus, All that seek shall find, and all that hunger and thirst are blest.

But these did seek, therefore they shall find; and these did hunger and thirst after the word, therefore they shall be blessed.

The



The Major must be limited, thus :

All that seek aright, and all that doe truly hunger and thirst after the Word shall be blessed. But these did seek aright, and did truly hunger and thirst after the Word.

That is false, for by hunger and thirst here is not meant their hungriing after the VVord, but it implies a want of the VVord; as a man that is pined wants food, so in *Israel* there should be a great want of the Prophets to preach the Word unto them.

Some take the words in an Allegorical, Mystical sense, and apply it to the *Jewes* after they had Crucified Christ, and stoned the Prophets, they should run from place to place to seek the VVord of the Lord, and should not find it. But this is too lax and general, and is against the context, which applies it to the ten Tribes, *vers.* 14.

### OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Those that will find the Lord when they seek him, must seek him whilst he may be found, Isa. 55. 6. Psal. 32. 6. 2 Cor. 6. 2.*

See twenty Motives to press this duty in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15. p. 253.

VVe must walk in the light whilst we have the light, the night comes when no man can work, *Job. 12. 35, 36.* This people here lost all for want of seeking in a right manner and season, they sought the VVord, but it was when it was too late.

2 *The scarcity of the Word (many times) makes it to be more highly prized by us.*

*Virtutem praesentem odimus, sublatam ex oculis colimus invadit. Horat. Cavendo potius quam fruendo. Sen.*

VWhen this Mannah fell thick about this people they regarded it not, but now they have lost their Prophets they can run from Sea to Sea to seek them. Those Sermons and Ordinances which people vilify now, when God removes them, they will magnifie and praise them. It is with those good wayes of God, as it is with good men, whilst they be alive amongst us we are ready to stone them, but when they are dead we are ready to Idolize them. Usually Gods blessings are more esteemed and valued by us when they are *Rare*, and we want them, than when we surfeit and abound with them. Things that are very rare are very precious, *Isa. 4. 1. & 13. 12.* Hence we read of dayes wherein the VVord of the Lord

was

was rare, and then it was precious in thoſe dayes, and why? becauſe *there was no open Viſion*; there was not a known Prophet in thoſe dayes to reach the people, and this made the Ordinances ſo precious then, 1 Sam. 3. 1.

The Commonneſſes of the Sun, of Water, Food, Rayment, Health, VVealth, Peace, Liberty, Sleep, Senſes, &c. make them little eſteemed; whereas if the Lord ſhould deprive us of any one of them, we ſhould quickly know the worth of them. See Mr. Caſe on Afflictions, p. 13, 14, 15.

Lament this thy folly, and beſeech the Lord to make thee know the worth of his bleſſings by the *enjoying*, rather than by the *wanting* of them.

3 *When people want the Word of God they ſhould goe from place to place, yea from Land to Land, rather than pine and periſh for want of inſtruction.*

In times of Dearth we ſee how farre people will travel for food for their Bodies (as *Jacobs* Sons did from *Canaan* to *Egypt*) and ſhall not we take more pains for our immortal Souls? If the Queen of *Sheba* (a perſon of great wealth and worth) went above a thouſand miles to hear the Wiſdome of *Solomon*, how farre ſhould we goe to hear a greater than *Solomon*? Luke 11. 31. How farre will men ride and run for the profits and pleaſures of their bodies, and ſhall not we be at more pains to ſave our Souls? In the dayes of Chriſt the people followed him from City to City on the *Week-dayes* to hear him, and he never reprov'd them for it, but fed their ſouls and bodies, Luke 6. 17. See my Com. on 2 Tim. 4. 2. p. 326.

## VER. 13.

*In that day ſhall the fair Virgins, and the young men, faint for thiſt.*

**I**N the two precedent Verſes the Prophet threatens a Spiritual famine, now follows a Corporal famine and deſtruction; from which none ſhould eſcape; neither the Young mans ſtrength, nor the Virgins Beauty ſhould any whit awayl them in that day.

In this Verſe we have, 1. A Judgement threatned, and that is *Thiſt*, they ſhould faint for thiſt. The queſtion will be,

what is meant by Thirst here? 1. Some take it literally for corporal thirst, which in those hot Countries where they wanted water, was a very grievous thing. Poor that want bread, yet have water many times to refresh them, but when a people have neither bread nor water, it must needs go hard with them.

2. This *Thirst* sets forth the great poverty, and extreame want of all things which this people should be brought into, (so the word is used, *Deut.* 28. 48. *Isa.* 44. 3. for great afflictions) and the terror of that final judgement which was coming upon them. They should not have so much as a little water to quench their thirst, but they should faint for thirst, (as men use to do in such cases) *Psal.* 107. 5. *Isa.* 51. 19, 20. This sense I take to be the most genuine.

3. Yet others take Thirst Metaphorically; for *Spiritual Thirst*, Gods wrath should burn them, and burden them, and yet they should have none to refresh and comfort them in their trouble. VVe have a Comment on this Text, in *Hos.* 2. 3, 4. where the Lord threatens to strip these Idolatrous Israelites naked, as in the day when they were born, and to make them a wilderness, and set them in a dry Land, and slay them with thirst; that is, he would destroy them with the scorching heat of his wrath, not tempered with any grace or comfort. So great should their misery be, that they should want both corporal and spiritual refreshing.

4. Here are the persons which should perish, and those are the prime and flower of the Land, the very hope of posterity. *The beautiful Virgins, and the Young Men.* These usually sin with an high hand, in open contempt of God and his word, they sin with more height and violence of affection, than elder persons use to do, and therefore the Lord threatens them especially.

*Virgins* use to be spared by men for their tenderness and beauty, but God is no respecter of persons, and young men are strong, and can better shift for themselves, yet these, even these, for all their beauty, vigour and strength, shall faint and dye, sorrow and perplexity shall cover and overwhelm them, as the word signifies; and if these cannot hold out, what shall become of children and old persons? This shews the generality of the Judgement, and that none shall escape.

Operientur  
in morte.

3. Here

3. Here is the time when all this shall come upon them, *'Tis in that day, viz. when Israel shall go into captivity, and be carried out of his own Land by the cruel Assyrians; when Samaria should be taken, and Gods Prophets scattered, then shall they faint for thirst.* Dr. Thomas Taylor, on Amos 8. 13, 14. in folio p. 263, &c.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Where spiritual Judgements go before, there corporal Judgements follow after.*

Such as condemn spiritual bread, shall want corporal. Before we read of a spiritual famine, now follows corporal distress of the choicest and fairest of both sexes. So true is that of Solomon, Prov. 13. 13, 18. *Who so despiseth the Word, shall be destroyed, yea poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction.*

2. *Beauty is vanity, Prov. 31. 30. Isa. 3. 24. & 40. 6, 7.*

'Tis a brittle thing, what disease almost doth not make it fade and wither? however it may take with vain man, yet it moves not God. If beautiful Virgins will sin against God, even the fair Virgins shall faint. Many have beauty that have, not piety, Prov. 6. 25. & 11. 22. Saul and Absalom were goodly personages, yet wicked men. Of the two, better have Piety without Beauty, than Beauty without Piety. An upright, pure soul, in a black decrepit body, is excellent. God many times makes up outward deformities with inward excellencies. Socrates and Esop were deformed in body, yet who more wise and witty?

*Felix nigredo  
qua mentis  
laetorem ha-  
bet. V. A La-  
pide in Ecclef.  
11. 2. & Sphinx  
Theolog. cap. 15.  
negavit. Carq.*

3. *Sin sweeps all before it.*

It deprives us not onely of bread, but also of water too, yea it deprives us not onely of corporal, but also of spiritual bread. It robs us of all our comforts, great reason then we have to hate it. 'Tis like that weed which we call Bishopweed, which frets away all the corn and good grain that grows neer it.

4. *The sins of young persons provoke the Lord to cut them off.*

Their sins are committred with more wilfulness, heat and violence, and so are more displeasing unto God, As I

have shewed before, on *Amos 4. 10.* Obs. 6.

*It is the great misery of wicked man, that they have no comfort in their misery.*

See this spiritual thirst set forth in seven particulars, by Mr. Obad. Sedgwick, on Isa. 55. 1. p. 5. 6. & Mr. Hildertham on John 4. 13. Lect. 9.

V When they be scorched with the wrath of God, yet they faint for thirst. The godly that thirst in a right spiritual manner, have Gods Spirit and Ministers to comfort them, and pronounce them blessed, *Mat. 5. 6.* But the wicked faint and sink under their burdens, and have not so much as one shower of Rain from Heaven, to quench and allay the flaming fire of Gods indignation, *Ezek. 22. 24.*

#### VERSE 14.

*They that swear by the sin of Samaria, and say, Thy God, O Dan, liveth, and the manner of Beersheba liveth, even they shall fall, and never rise up again.*

**T**HE Prophet having reprov'd them before for their oppression and unrighteousness towards men, comes now to denounce Gods Judgements against them, for their Superstition and Idolatry towards God.

In the words we have 1. A Commination, or a Judgement threatened, and that is, the irreparable ruine of the Ten Tribes, *They shall fall, and never rise up again.* They shall so fall (for their cruelty and Idolatry) that they shall rise no more. If a man fall, and yet hath hope of rising again; it upholds and comforts him; but these Israelites fell into captivity, and never were restored. *Judah*, which was the better of the two, after the seventy years captivity, returned again into their own Land; but the Ten Tribes were carried out of their own Land by *Salmaneser* King of *Affyria*. and never returned any more, *Amos 5. 2.* The Lord had tried all gentle means to cure them, but all in vain, and therefore now he resolves to make a final end with them, and to smite them so as *they shall fall* irrecoverably, and never rise up again, nor return more to their own Land, as appears, *2 King. 17.* To fall, and never rise, to dye, and not live, to be set below, and not above, to sit in darkness, and have no light; such amplifications in Scripture are vehement asseverations, and are not used in vain by God.

a Here

2. Here is the ground or reason of this Commination, and that is, their Superstition and Idolatry,

- They swear
1. By the sin of *Samaria*.
  2. By the God of *Dan*.
  3. By the manner of *Beer-sheba*.

That is, They swear by the Molten Images, and Golden Calves, which *Jeroboam* the King of *Samaria* had set up at *Dan* and *Bethel*. These Idols are called, *The sin of Samaria*, because *Samaria* was the Metropolis, and chief seat of their Kings, and they setting up Idolatry at *Bethel*, which was not far from *Samaria*, drew *Samaria* and all the people of the Land with them, and therefore this sin is properly laid at their doors. When the people of *Israel* in *Moses* his time did worship the golden Calf, it is called their *Sin*, *Deut.* 9.

*Ashm, peccatum, delictum, a verbo Asham, iniquè fecit, deliquit. Syn. Gen.*

*Dicitur delictum Samariae, quia gravissimi sanè delicti regis & populi tum effectus, tum objectum fuit. Estius in loca difficil.*

21. I took *your Sin*, that is, I took the Molten Calf, where-with you had committed that abominable sin of Idolatry, and burnt it with fire, and the Scripture frequently calls Idols by the name of sin, *1 King.* 12. 29, 30. *Isa.* 27. 9. & 31. 7. *Hos.* 10. 8. *Zach.* 5. 8. They thought they had done God an high peece of service, in sacrificing and swearing by the Calves; but the Lord plainly tells them, that 'twas their great sin so to do.

3. He goes on to prove their Idolatry, by their forms of swearing then in use, for our oaths are a kinde of confession of our Faith, whereby we testifie, that hee whom we swear by knows our hearts, and is able to punish us if we swear falsely; hence swearing is frequently put for religious worship. This swearing by Idols, and fictitious Gods (as Idolaters use to do) as if they had no other God to swear by, could not but highly provoke the Lord to cast them off, who thus ungratefully and disingenuously forsook him, the fountain of all their happiness.

They say, *Thy God O Dan liveth*; or they swear by the life of *Dan*, which yet was a dead Idol, and had no life in it. This was the usual form of swearing in those daies, as you may see, *Gen.* 42. 15. *Judg.* 8. 19. *Ruth* 3. 13. *Jer.* 12. 16. They used the same form of swearing by their Idols, as the godly did



*Jurant, ita ut  
vivat Deus qui  
in Dan colitur.  
Grotius.*

by the true God. *Thy God O Dan Lives*, (i. e.) Let thy Calf live O *Dan*, or as sure as thy Calf lives, O *Dan*. They swore by this Idol, as if there were some Deity and Divinity in it, when 'twas a meer abomination, and Idol of their own inventing, *Hos.* 8. 5, 6. *Jeroboam* when he came first to the Crown, set up two Golden Calves, as tutelary Gods, the one at *Bethel*, not far from *Samaria*; the other in *Dan*, which was in the North part of *Canaan*, it being one of the utmost coasts thereof, *1 King.* 12. 29, 30. *Jer.* 4. 15.

4. Yet more, *They swear by the manner of Beersheba*. *Beersheba* was a City of *Canaan*, *Josh.* 19. 2. being the utmost bound of the holy Land toward the South, as *Dan* was toward the North, hence from *Dan* to *Beersheba* are oft put for the whole Land of *Israel*, from one end to the other, they being the utmost borders of the whole Land, *Judg.* 20. 1. *1 Sam.* 3. 20. *2 Sam.* 3. 10. *1 Chron.* 8. 2. 'Twas a famous City, where the Judges used to sit, *1 Sam.* 8. 2. yet this place was infected with Idolatry, as well as *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, and therefore they are commanded to pass by it, *Amos* 5. 5. and yet they swear, *that the manner of Beersheba lives*. Or the way of *Beersheba* lives (as 'tis in the fountain) that is, they swear by a strange God, whose way, Rites, Ceremonies, and manner of Worship they had set up at *Beersheba*: for *by way* in Scripture is meant the manner of divine worship and serving of God. 'Tis here taken in a bad sense. See *Jer.* 32. 39. *Act.* 9. 2. & 18. 25. & 24. 14. Thus we see how the whole Land was infected with Idolatry, from one side to another, there was no sound part in it, which serves to justify Gods Justice in their universal ruine.

*Derech Via.*

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Idolatry, it is a sinning sin.*

It is the *Sin* with an Emphasis, and by way of eminency, which destroys a Land, *Dent.* 9. 21. it is a great sin in it self, and the root of many other abominations; whatever Sin God bears withall, yet he cannot, he will not bear with this (as I have shewed at large elsewhere) other sins were *Cause adjungentes*, they help to ruine *Israel*, but their Idolatry was the

In my Com on  
*Hos.* 13. 16.  
*Obf.* 12. p. 88,  
133, 139, 158,  
160.

the primary cause of that fatal blow, and of their final overthrow.

2 *The Judgement of men, and the Judgement of God differ much.*

That which man calls here by way of honour, a god, that God calls by way of dishonour and detestation, *A Sin*, and abominable, *Jer. 16. 18. & 44. 4.* Thus the world calls Riches, Substance, Goods, Happinesse, *Psal. 4. 6.* but the Holy Ghost calls them Vanities, Thorns, Husks, unrighteous Mammon: the world calls Pride, Decency, but God calls it an abomination. The world calls Coverousnesse, Good-husbandry, but God calls it the root of all evil. The Masse, with all its Superstitious rites, Antichrist calls it Divine Service, but God saith, *In vain doe yee worship me, teaching for Doctrines the Precepts of men.* Satan loves not to have Sin goe bare-faced, and therefore he usually puts a fair Glove upon a foul hand, and calls Vice by the name of Vertue. But God hath Sat. Dev. p. 18. cursed those that call evil good, *Isa. 5. 20.* many think to 27. they highly please God, and doe him abundance of service by their Superstitious, Self-conceited worship, but he tells them here, it is their sin and shame so to doe; So true is that of our Saviour, *Luke 16. 15. That which is highly esteemed in the sight of carnal, superstitious men, is an abomination in the sight of God.*

3 *Mixture in Gods Worship is a God-provoking Sin.*

When we are partly for God, and partly for *Baal*, partly for Christ, and partly for Calves at *Dan* and *Beersheba*, this mingle-mangle, and Linse-woolse-religion is very displeasing unto God, and ruined *Israel* here. They pretended that they worshipped the true God, in and by those Idols which they swore by, but because God had commanded them no such way of Worship, he utterly disclaims it, and severely punisheth them for their pains, *2 King. 17. 33, 34.* those that are said to fear the Lord, and yet serve their owne gods, in the very next verse are said, *Not to fear the Lord.*

4 *We may not swear by Idols.*

It is a Deifying of them; hence the Lord threatens to punish those that swear by them that are no gods, *Jer. 5. 7. Zeph. Christ. l. 2. cap. 1. 5.* we may not swear by Creatures, *Matth. 5. 34, 35, 36, 9. P. 113. folio. Jam. 5. 12.* nor by any fictitious gods at *Dan* and *Beelal*, as many

See Brooks his  
remedies against  
Sat. Dev. p. 18.  
to 27.

See Crook 2-  
gainst Hypo-  
cricie. P. 1. ch.  
11. p. 107.

V. Dani. xlvic.  
Christ. l. 2. cap.  
9. P. 113. folio.

See Mr. Clerks  
Mirror, ch. 129.  
and Deuts  
Path-way, p.  
154. to 166.

many Popish, ignorant persons amongst us doe; when they swear *Ber Lady*, *Ber Lukins*, by St. *Anthony*, by S. *Gys*, by the *Masse*, by *Cock*, by my *Fay*, by my *Feiks*, by my *Feikins*, by my *Truly*, &c. All these are Oathes, by Idols and by Creatures, which our jealous God will not brook at our hands; you may mock men with them, but God will not be mocked; his Curse will seize upon the houses where such swearers dwell, *Zach. 5. 3.*

We all professe our selves to be worshippers of the true God, yet our swearing by them that are no gods is a kind of renouncing the true God, by whom only we should swear, as him only we should serve. God is very tender of his owne Glory, and will not suffer it to be given to others. Hence wee are so oft commanded when we swear, to swear only by the name of the true and living God, *Deut. 9. 13. & 10. 20. Psa. 63. ult. Isa. 45. 23. & 65. 16. Jer. 12. 16.*

Oathes are one special part of Divine Worship, wherein God is glorified in his Attribures of Omniscieny, Omnipotence, and Omnipotence, &c. We beleeve that he knowes our hearts, and is able to punish us if we perform not our Oathes, or swear falsly; and to this end we call upon him when wee swear. Hence *Isaiah* Prophesying of the calling of the *Egyptians* to the faith; tells us, that in that day five Cities in *Egypt* shall speak the Language of *Canaan*, and shall swear by the Lord of Hosts; that is, they shall shew that he is their God, by their swearing by his name, *Isa. 19. 18.*

5 *Superstition is a toylsome thing.*

See my Com.  
on Hof. 13. 16.  
p. 119, 120. &  
Clerks Mirror,  
chap. 128.

They goe here to *Dan* and *Beerseba*, from the North to the South, all the Land over after Idols, *1 King. 12. 30.* what pains and Peregrinations doe the Papists take in Journies, Whippings, and other kinds of Will-worship, yet many amongst us will scarce goe out of their doors to hear the Gospel of Salvation. Blind Idolaters shall rise in Judgment against the men of this Generation, who take more pains in going to Hell, than many doe for Heaven.

6 *Great Cities many times are the Seminaries of great Sins.*

The Idolatry which over-spread all *Israel* is laid here at *Samaritan* door, which was the chief City of the Land: and the place of the Kings residence, from hence as from a fountain all the streams of Prophanenesse, Superstition, and Idolatry

try, over-spread the Land, here it was practised, maintained, and upheld; and therefore Princes and Rulers should have a special care to keep the great Cities of the Land pure, that they may be patterns of Piety, and Looking-glasses by which the Country round about them may dress themselves; for such as the Mother, such usually are the Daughters.

7 *Idolaters shall be utterly ruined.*

They shall be at last so broken, that they shall never rise more. A good man may fall into afflictions and trouble seven times in a day, yet he riseth again, but the wicked shall fall into mischief irrecoverably, and never rise more, as the *Amitehis* implies, *Prov. 24. 16.* Job fell into deep distress, yet at last he rose again, and his latter end was better than his beginning, *Job 42. 12.* but the wicked are broken as with an Iron Rod, and dash in peices like a Potters Vessel, which can never be sodered together again, *Psal 2. 9.* God strikes them through the gall, so that all the Physicians in the world cannot heal them, *Job 20. 25,*

See Mr. Trapp  
on Prov. 24. 16.

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AN



AN  
EXPOSITION,  
WITH  
Practical OBSERVATIONS  
UPON  
The Ninth Chapter of *Amos*.

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VERSE I.

*I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, and hee said,  
Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake:  
and cut them in the head all of them, and I will slay  
the last of them with the sword: hee that fleeth of them  
shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them, shall  
not be delivered.*

**I**N this last Chapter, which contains the last Vision and Prophecy of the destruction of *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, wee have the summe and substance of the seventh Sermon of the Prophet *Amos*, which consists of three parts.

1. A Commination.
2. A confirmation of that Commination.
3. A Mitigation or Qualification of this Commination with Evangelical promises of consolation and restauration. So that this Chapter consists both of Law and Gospel, of judgement and mercy; which is the best mixture that a Prophet of God can

can use, because all ingenuous natures are wrought upon, either by judgements or mercies, and those that neither of these can work upon, are desperate.

1. Here is a continuation of Gods Commination by way of Type or Vision, wherein we have, 1. The Vision propounded, viz. *the smiting of the lintel of the Temple door, that the posts might shake.* Denoting thereby the certainty of their ruine and transportation, without any possibility of escaping.

2. The Vision is expounded, *vers. 1.* where we have 1. The persons that shall be cut off, and those are the body of the people, the generality of the Land, both great and small; as all had sinned, so all must now suffer for sin. 1. He commands, *Smite them in the head,* that is, cut off Kings, Princes and Priests, both in *Israel* and *Judah.* 2. Rest not there, but *slay the rest of them with the sword,* that is, cut off the inferiour sort.

3. Here is the certainty and inevitableness of their suffering confirmed by Arguments drawn, first from the Omnipresence of God, no place what ever can protect a sinful people from his revenging hand, and this is set forth 1. Generally, *vers. 1.* *Hee that flyeth, shall not flee away, and hee that escapeth, shall not be delivered.* There is no escaping when God pursues.

2. By a notable enumeration of some particular places, shewing that they

should not escape 1. In Hell, *vers. 2.*

though they hid 2. In Heaven.

themselves 3. In the tops of inaccessible mountains, *vers. 3.*

4. In the bottome of the Sea.

5. In Captivity. Though they went into banishment out of their own Land, yet *there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them,* *vers. 4.* So that they were safe neither at home nor abroad; neither in their own Land, nor in strange Countries.

4. Their total overthrow is further confirmed by Arguments drawn 1. From the anger of God, *vers. 4, 8.* *I will set mine eyes upon them for evil.* 'Tis a Metaphor from men in whom the anger of the heart, discovers it self in the eyes and face.

2. From the might and majesty of God, who hath power to punish them; and this power is set forth, 1. By his Titles,



*Hee is the Lord God of hosts, vers. 5. 3. By the effects of his power.*

1. *If he but touch the Land, it shall melt, vers. 5. with a touch he can destroy a Land, and turn it into its first Chaos.*

2. He can bring an overflowing flood upon it, that shall quickly over-run all, *vers. 5.*

3. By his work of Creation, 1. *In Heaven, 'tis hee that builds the stories of Heaven.* By his power and wisdom hee created the Heavens, and the several spheres and regions of the Air, as so many stories one above another, *vers. 6.*

2. *In the earth,* he hath founded his Troops in the earth, *vers. 6.* He hath variety of creatures, as so many Troops on earth ready prest to serve him, and execute his commands, they are all his servants, *Psal. 119. 91.*

3. *In the Sea.* He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and they presently cover the face of the earth, *vers. 6.* By all which he proves himself to be, The Great *Jehovah* of all the world.

5. He confirms the certainty of their destruction from the sinfulness of their condition. As first, They were dis-ingenuous and ungrateful, whereas he had brought them up out of the Land of *Egypt*, and made them his *Israel*, yet they behaved themselves more like *Ethiopians*, than *Israelites*; and therefore as they had been like to Heathens in sinning, so now they should be like them in suffering, *vers. 7.*

2. They were very secure and regardless of Gods threatenings, contemning the warnings of Gods Prophets, and therefore the Lord threatens, that *they should fall by the sword, vers. 10.*

3. The Prophet having before used *Driving Motives*, drawn from the Judgements of God; comes now to *Drawing Motives*, taken from the mercies and comfortable promises of God. Before he had brought them to Mount *Ebal*, the Mount of cursing; but now he brings them to Mount *Gerizim*, the Mount of Blessing. Before he tried them with legal Menaces, and dreadful Comminations, now he closeth his Prophecy with Gospel-mercies, and Evangelical consolations.

7. He tells them that an elect remnant should be saved in the midst of these calamities, till better daies should come under the Gospel. Though the Lord were resolved to punish the

body

body of that rebellious Nation, yet he would not utterly destroy them all, but would preserve some because of his Covenant; and though they might be sifted, tossed and tried with many afflictions, and go into captivity as well as others; yet not one grain should fall to the ground, nor any one of Gods elect perish eternally; *versf. 8, 9.*

2. Here is the happy Restauration of the Church in Gospel-times set forth. Under the type of *raising up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen*, *versf. 11.* Though the house of *David*, and the men of *Judah* and *Israel* were sorely shattered, and sunk very low by reason of their captivity, and other miseries, which lay upon them; so that they were like a Tabernacle fallen down, or a Garden laid open, the fence being broken down; yet in Christ the true heir of *David*, it should in Gospel-times be restored and repaired.

3. According to the custome of the Prophets in Old-Testament times, he prophesieth of the glory and happiness of the Church, which he sets forth by the magnificence and affluence of outward blessings; typifying thereby those spiritual mercies which God would give to the elect remnant after their sufferings.

1. He promisetith that the Nations should be subdued under them, and their bounds should be enlarged by taking in the Gentiles in these Gospel-times into communion with them, *versf. 12.*

2. Great plenty in their fields and Vineyards, *versf. 13, 14.*

3. Re-edifying of their ruined Cities, *versf. 14.*

4. Returning from captivity and banishment, and re-establishment in their own Land, in despite of all their enemies, *versf. 15.*

Object. But 'tis impossible, that ever such things should be effected.

Answer. To men who are led by sense and carnal reason, these things may seem impossible; but to the Almighty all things are possible. Now 'tis he that undertakes the work, and 'tis he that will effect it in his due time. 'Tis I that will bring them again, and I will plant them in the Land that I have given them, even I will do this, saith the Lord Almighty, who am I by God in covenant with thee.

## VERSE I.

*I saw the Lord standing upon the Altar, &c.*

**T**He destruction of this people was shadowed out before, by four visions; This is the fifth and last, by which the Prophet confirms that Commination which he had published in the precedent chapters.

The better to confirm the truth and authority of what he should speak, he begins first with his usual Preface, *Amos 1. 1. & 8. 1. I saw the Lord*, the King of Kings, and supream Monarch of all the world, whom *Israel* and *Judah* have provoked to wrath with their Idolatry; him, I say, *I saw* in a trance or Prophetical vision, *standing*, which implies two things, 1. That he was ready to depart from this rebellious people, his gracious presence should now no longer abide amongst them. 2. *Stat ut vindex*, he stands ready to pronounce the final sentence against them, and to execute his righteous judgement on them, so *Amos 7. 7.* So that here is the Lords posture, *He stands*.

2. Here is the place where he stands, viz. *upon the Altar*. Here two great Questions will arise. 1. How could *Amos* see God, when 'tis said, *No man hath seen God at any time*, and none can see him and live, *Exod. 33. 20. John 1. 18.* yet *Amos* is said to see God and live?

*Ans.* The Answer is easie, There is a twofold seeing of God. 1. As he is in himself in his transcendent glory and essence, and thus no mortal man cloathed with flesh and blood, and clogged with humane infirmities, can see God and live; it would overwhelm him, and he could not bear it, *1 Tim. 6. 16. 1 Job 4. 12.* but in the life to come we shall see him clearly as he is, *1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 John 3. 2.*

2. There is a seeing of him in this life darkly, in his word and works, and visionarily, by visions, external apparitions, signs and sights; such as our infirmities will bear; and thus he appeared to *Amos*, to *Abraham*, to *Isaiah*, chap. 6. 1. *Ezek. 1. 1. & 43. 3. 4. Daniel* and others. These saw the Lord in Visions, but not in his Essence.

A second Question is, *What is meant by the Altar here?*

*Ans.*

See Patrick,  
Jewish Hypoc.  
ch. 9. ll. 8. p.  
128.

See this point  
excellently  
cleared by Dr.  
Arrowsmith on  
John 1. 18.

*Ans.* Here Interpreters are divided. Some conceive that *Amos* living at *Bethel*, and being sent to preach principally to the ten Tribes, saw the Lord standing upon some Idolatrous Altar, at *Dan* or *Bethel* (not by way of approbation, but intending its destruction) as ready to do execution there, throwing down the Altar, and its worshippers. But 'tis probable, that the Lord would not so far countenance those Idolatrous places, as to shew any vision, or utter any Oracle there, where the Devil was worshipped, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15.

Others upon better grounds, do interpret it of Gods standing on the Brazen Altar, which was in *Solomons* Temple in *Jerusalem*, which being without the Temple in the Inner Court, may intimate Gods beginning to forsake his Temple and people; and that there was no hope of pardon left, seeing the place of propitiation was by God converted into a seat of Justice, he standing upon the Altar of burnt-offerings, as it were to slay the men of those times, whose provocations he could no longer bear; and albeit the Prophet was principally sent to *Israel*, yet he many times takes in *Judah* with them (as I have shewed on *Amos* 6. 1.) As both had sinned, so both must suffer, and be laid in the dust; neither should their Temple in which *Judah* so much gloried, any whit avail them in the day of Gods wrath; much less should those Idol and prophane Temples of *Dan* and *Bethel* any whit avail *Israel*, which God never commanded to be built, but alwaies abhorred as dens of Devils, 2 *Chron.* 11. 15.

4. Here is the *Vision* it self, viz. the destruction of *Judah* and *Israel* set forth by the smiting of the Lintel of the door, that the posts might shake; And he said, *Smite the lintel of the door, &c.* The question will be, whom doth the Lord here speak to. when he sayes, *smite*?

*Ans.* 1. Some conceive that he speaks to the Prophet, who was commanded to denounce judgements against them, that all might quake for fear. Others conceive that he means *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*, who burnt the Temple, and smote the Altar. Others apply it to *Salmanser* the King of *Assyria*, who executed Gods wrath upon *Israel*, carried them into captivity, and destroyed their Idol-Temples. These are but conjectures.

Most conceive that it was some *Angel* which the Lord had appointed

appointed as the executioner of this Judgement upon this people; hence we so often read in Scripture that God made use of Angels for such ends.

5. Here is the work that this Angel must do. *He must smite the lintel of the door of the Temple*; The gate of the Temple had a threshold and posts, and over the threshold in the frontispeece was elegant work, 1 King. 6. 33, 34, 35.

The Greeks  
call it υπέρθυ-  
ρον, ab υπέρ  
super & θυρα  
jannæ.

The Hebrews  
call it Haccaph-  
tor, superlimi-  
nare, stil. porta  
Templi.

By the *Lintel* here is meant the Transome, or Head-peece over the door, *Exod. 12. 32*. The word also signifies an Apple or Pomegranate, that stood peradventure on the top of the Temple or Porch, as is usual in magnificent structures, where they set knops or balls on the frontispeece, and upper lintels of the doors, adorned with artificial Flowers, Apples, Pomegranates, &c.

6. Here is the manner, how the Angel must smite the Lintel, not faintly and feebly, but with vehemency and courage, so that the posts and pillars may shake again. By the lintel is meant the Superiours, and by the posts which supported it, the Inferiours; all should be smitten, and made to quake again for fear; for so it follows, *Cut them in the head all of them*; where we have the *Persons* which the Angel must smite, and those are, 1. The *Heads of Israel*, that is, the Rulers Ecclesiastical and Civil. Cut them in the head, or cut them which are the head of all, viz. the chief and principal men in Church and State, both Princes and Priests. A cut in the body may be cured, but a cut in the head is dangerous and deadly, *Psal. 68. 30*. The Vulgar Latine mistaking the Original word, render it thus, *Smite, for Covetousness*, the head of them all. But the word *Betsamu*, coming from *Baksa*, properly signifies to wound or cut, and Metaphorically to be covetous.

2. The Peasants and the Poor. *I will slay the last of them*.

Homines infima  
classis, i.e. vilis-  
simi & abjectis-  
simi.

Acharitimi,  
i.e. novissimum  
eorum, quod se-  
quitur, posteris-  
tas.

By the last or hinmost here is meant the inferiour sort or common people, who are the last and lowest of the people. Before he threatned the Head, and now he comes to the Heel. The Portal with the Pavement, all must be smitten. Cut them down (saith God to the Angel) cleave them from top to toe, from head to tail, from first to last, let none escape.

Some render it thus, *I will slay the residue or posterity*; Indeed the word is homonymous, and admits of divers significations

cations, sometimes it signifies the last, or that which follows; and sometimes 'tis put for posterity and children; and though it be true that God did destroy these wicked ones with their posterity; yet most genuinely the word is rendred by our Translators here, *The last of them*, as relating to the inferiour sort, and then the sense runs clear, I will slay both high and low, both head and heel.

3. Here is the means by which God will destroy them, and that is, by the last and forest of his judgements, 'tis by the sword, *Israel shall fall by the sword of the Assyrian*, and *Judah by the sword of the Babylonian*.

Quest. But how are all said to be slain, when 'tis manifest that many escaped, and went onely into captivity into Assyria and Chaldea?

Ans. The word All, in Scripture is taken two waies See *willow*

1. *Collectively*, for all the body of a people. 2. *Distributively*, for some of all sorts; some rich, some poor; some high, and some low; and so the word is taken here for many, very many both in *Samaria* and *Jerusalem* shall dye for it. So that when he saith All, hee speaketh Hyperbolically, and means all comparatively, that is, those that escape shall be but few in comparison of those that dye. So *1. 2. 21.* All men seek their own, that is, the greatest part do so.

2. We must distinguish of *slaying*. 1. There is an actual slaying and killing out-right, and so all were not slain. 2. There is a slaying in a *Civil Sense*, when a man goes into captivity, and is banished from house and harbour, being brought very low by affliction, and this is called slaying in Scripture, *Plal. 78 34.* and thus all *Israel* and *Judah* were slain. that is, they were carried into captivity, the one by the *Assyrian*, and the other by the *Babylonian*.

Obj. But what do you tell us of slaying, we will hide our selves, and flee for it?

Ans. The Prophet by a Prolepsis stops this gap, and tells them that the judgement is inevitable, flying will not avail; for he that fliesh shall not flee away [but shall be overtaken] and he that escapeth of them, shall not be delivered. They may attempt and endeavour an escape, but it shall be in vain, for Gods Justice shall quickly overtake them, and his sentence be executed on them. This doubling of the words is very emphatical, *Fugiens non evadit. nec evadit.*



tical, and is more than if he had simply said, They shall finde no hiding-place.

It aggravates a mans miserie, to fly, and then be taken, and when he thinks he hath escaped the danger, then to fall into it, or a worse, is very sad; yet so 'twas here, they thought to shift for themselves, as formerly they had done, and to save themselves by flight, but now the day of their calamity was come, and they should not escape; they were ripe for ruine, and therefore the Lord tells them, that there was now no way nor hope of escaping, but they must into their enemies hands; and if any should escape one trouble, yet he should fall into another; though he escape one stroke at one time, yet he shall not be delivered from another stroke at another time, but shall be like one that fleeth from a Lion, and a Bear should meet him, Amos 5. 19.

The summe of all is this. *In a Vision I Amos saw the Lord* (having left the Temple) *to stand upon the Altar without, and hee commanded his Angel to smite the Lintel, or Head-piece over the door of the Temple, so vehemently that the posts thereof may shake, to signifie this fatal stroke which I will give the Rulers, both Civil and Ecclesiastical in Israel and Judah: for I have decreed to cleave them down the middle, and to smite them from top to toe, both Lintel and Threshold both Superiours and Inferiours, all have sinned, and all shall suffer. Israel shall suddenly fall by the hand of the Assyrian, and Judah not long after shall go captive into Babylon. They are incorrigible, and therefore I am become inexorable, and their judgements are inevitable; though they fly, yet they shall not escape, no power, nor policy shall be able to deliver them from my revenging hand.*

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1. God formerly revealed his mind to his Prophets by Types and Visions.

I saw in a Vision (sayes Amos) but in the last daies hee hath spoken to us more plainly and fully by his Son, Heb. 1. 1, 2. but of this before, on chap. 8. Ver. 1. Obs. 3.

2. God will depart from those that depart from him.

He will forsake those that forsake him, 2 Chron. 15. 2. When Jerusalem forsakes God, then God forsakes Jerusalem

*Jerusalem*, 2 *King.* 21. 13, 14. These people had forsaken God, and followed Idols, and now God stands upon the Altar ready to depart from them, and leave them in the hands of their enemies. This true, the Lord is loath to leave his people, and therefore he removes gradually, and by degrees from them. When he departed from *Jerusalem*, he did it not in a moment, but first he warns them by his Prophets, then he removes from the Cherub to the Threshold, *Ezek.* 9. 3. and 10. 5. Such is Gods goodness and bowels of pity to his people, that he is very unwilling to sell them into his enemies hands, if any means might prevent it, *Psal.* 81. 13, 14. *Isa.* 48. 18. *Ezek.* 18. 30, 31, 32. *Hos.* 6. 4. & 11. 8, 9. but when a people are so desperately set, that they will none of God, then he swears their ruine, *Psal.* 95. 11. This forsaking him is a great evil, and a God-provoking-sin, *Jer.* 2. 12, 13. Hence old *David* counselling young *Solomon* to know and serve the Lord, useth this Motive amongst the rest; *If thou seek him, he will be found of thee, but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off for ever,* 1 *Chron.* 28. 9.

3. Judgement usually begins at the house of God.

It begins at the Sanctuary, *Ezek.* 9. 6. 1 *Pet.* 4. 17. the higher in privileges, the nearer to judgement, *Dan.* 9. 12. *Amos* 3. 2. *Mat.* 11. 23. The nearer to God, the more do our sins dishonour him, and therefore he begins with such, 2 *Sam.* 12. 7, 8. though he ends not with them. The famine began at *Jacobs* house, and then to *Egypt*. The *Israelites* went first into captivity, and after the *Assyrians* were destroyed by the *Medes* and *Persians*. So *Jer.* 25. 17, 18, 28, 29. The Lord gives the cup, first to *Jerusalem*, and then to *Egypt*, *Uz*, *Ekyon*, *Edom*, *Moab*. The Posts and Pillars of the Temple door must first be smitten; and if this be done to the green tree, what shall be done to the dry? if this be done to Gods own Temple, what shall become of Idol-Temples? If the Lord spare not *Jerusalem*, but shew his impartial justice in punishing them for their sins, what shall be done to *Babylon*? See more in my Com. on *Hos.* 13. 15. *Obi.* 3.

4. Political Rulers are the Heads of a people.

Cur them in the Head. They are oft called so in Scripture, *Exod.* 6. 14. & 18. 25. *Numb.* 1. 16. & 24. 4. & 17. 2. *Judg.* 11. 8. 1 *Sam.* 15. 27. Look what the Head is to the Body natural, that Rulers are, or ought to be to the body Political.

As the head is placed highest in the body, and sees, consults and reasons for the preservation of the body, so this word implies both dignity and duty, and should teach those who are set in place of preheminance above others, to consult for the good of their people, that they may live peaceably and piously under them, 1 Tim. 2. 2. Many cry up the dignity of Princes, but they should tell them of their duty also, and some cry them up as *Head of the Church*, as well as of the State; Mr. Hart a Popish Priest upbraids us with it, *That we take the Supremacy from the Pope, and give it to the Prince, who is less capable of it.* But the learned Dr. replies well. The Supremacy (saith he) which we take from the

See Dr. Reynolds against Hart, chap. 10. p. 669, &c. *Altare Dimasceum* cap. 1. p. 10, &c. Mr. Tombs his Tract. about the Oath of Supremacy.

Pope, we give it to no mortal creature, Prince or other. But the Pope having seized on part of Christs right, and part of the Princes; &c. we have taken the Princes power from him, and given it to him to whom

it was due, according to that of our Saviour, *Give to Caesar what is Caesars, and to God what is Gods, &c.* The Supremacy therefore which we give our Prince in things Ecclesiastical, is to deal therein as *Hezekiah* did, and not as *Uzziah*; no to preach, administer Sacraments, or practise the Discipline of the Church, but to provide that these things be done as they ought, by them whom God hath called thereto. We give to

See more in *Jus Divinum Regim. Eccles.* p. 43, 44.

*Caesar* no more than is *Caesars*, Thus he. Hence 'tis that our Princes do abstain from the title of being called Heads of the Church, which is proper onely to Christ, and content themselves with the title of Supreme Governours. As for the Pope, he is so far from being Head of the Church, that he is rather the Tail, being indeed not so much as a sound member of it; but the Head of that Apostasie from the Faith, which was foretold, 2 Thes. 2. 3. 'Twould be sad with the Church if it had no better a Head than the Popes have been, some of which have been Sodomites, Magicians, Adulterers, and gave their souls to the Devil to get the Popedome; what are the Members when the Heads are such?

3. *These Heads of the people when they sin against God, shall be punished as well as others.*

Cut them in the Head, or cut them which are the Head of all: God is no respecter of persons, but be they Head or Heel, if

if they sin againſt him, they cannot eſcape. *Tophet is prepared of old even for the King.* If the proud King of *Aſſyria* will oppreſs and oppoſe the people of God, he muſt know that God hath prepared a place of puniſhment for ſuch cruel Tyrants, See more in my *Iſa.* 30. 33. God is terrible to the Kings of the earth, *Pſal.* Com. on *Pſal.* 76. ult. 81. 1. p. 45.

6. *Univerſality in ſin, brings univerſality in ſuffering.*

When the head and the feet, the higheſt and the loweſt ſin together, then ſlay them all with the ſword. But of this be- fore. See my Com. on *Hſ.* 13. 16. p. 109.

7. *The Angels of God oft-times are the executioners of his wrath upon wicked men.*

An Angel here muſt ſmite them in the head. The *Sodomites* that vexed *Lot* were ſmiten blind by an Angel, *Gen.* 19. 11. The firſt-born of *Egypt* were ſlain by an Angel, *Exod.* 12. 23, 29. When *Balaam* was going to curſe Gods people, an Angel meets him and ſtops him, *Numb.* 22. 22. If God will ſend a Peſtilence on *Iſrael*, he hath an Angel ready to do it, *2 Sam.* 24. 16. If he will have the Army of the *Aſſyrians* deſtroyed, an Angel ſhall do it, *Iſa.* 37. 36. Proud *Herod* was ſmiten by an Angel, *Mat.* 12. 23. and at the laſt day they ſhall bring the wicked to Chriſts bar, there to receive their final doom, *Mat.* 13. 41. Who would not then fear to offend this great and mighty God; who hath ſo many glorious Angels ready at the leaſt beck of their Lord, to deſtroy both us and ours. As the Apoſtle would have women covered, and modeſt, becauſe of the Angels; ſo I would have men good and gracious, becauſe of the Angels, (who are grieved to ſee the diſhonours done to their Lord and Maſter) that we may not provoke the Lord to ſend them againſt us for our deſtruction, but rather to be our Guardians to ſalvation.

for us, in Mr *Leighs* Body of Divinity, l. 3. c. 7. p. 274. and Mr. *Lowes* Sermon on *Heb.* 1. 14. See ſix good offices which the Angels do

8. *The judgements that befall us, come from God.*

*I will ſlay them, I will bring them down, I will ſearch them out, I will command the Serpent to bite them, verſ. 2, 3, 4.* Whatever be the Inſtrument, yet God is the prime Agent. Though there may be many executioners, yet there is but one prime mover of them all! *'Tis he that kills, and he that makes alive,*

*alsoe, 1 Sam. 8. 6.* 'Tis he that gives, and he that takes, *Job* 1. 21. and therefore they are called *His* Judgements, by a special propriety, as coming most immediately from him, *Isa.* 26. 8. 9. The consideration of this will keep us from murmuring and impatience, as it did *Job*, and *David*, we shall be dumb and silent when we see 'tis the Lord that doth it. How great then is their sin, that ascribe their sicknesses, losses, crosses, &c. to second causes, never looking at Gods hand, he is not in any of their thoughts.

9. *Wicked men are cowardly, fearful men, Isa. 33. 14. Jer. 4. 9.*

When troubles come they are all for flying, digging into Hell, climbing the tops of mountains, getting into the depths of the Sea, hiding themselves in chambers, *King. 22. 25.* When troubles come, their spirit is gone, 'tis fallen from their hearts into their heels; and they are going, yea flying from it, which is the cowards pace. They fly not onely when they are pursued, but when none pursues them, but their own fancy, *Prov. 28. 1.* they have guilty consciences, which make them fly at the shaking of a leaf, *Levit. 26. 36.* those who are most fearless in sinning, are most fearful of suffering, *Dan. 1. 4. 5. 6.* whereas the righteous; like the valiant horse, that is prepared for the battel, rejoiceth and goeth forth to meet the armed man, *Job 39. 19. to 26.* he had rather dye, than run, if duty bids him stay and stand. When troubles come upon the wicked, their great care is how to be shut of them, and how to get out of them, and out-run them; not how to have them sanctified, or how to be bettered by them. But the good man desires rather to have the trouble sanctified, than removed; and if he fly, 'tis to God, not from him, he is his Tower and his hiding-place, by Prayer and Faith he goes unto him, yea, into him, and so is safe, *Prov. 18. 10.*

10. *all the shifts and evasions of wicked men, shall not avail them in the day of wrath.*

Hee that fleeth, shall not flee away, viz. so as to escape by his flight, for he shall be overtaken. Or if he do escape one danger, yet he shall not be delivered, but he shall fall into another, *Amos 5. 19.* Hee that flees from a Lion, shall fall into the mouth of a Bear, *Isa. 30. 26. 27.* whilst they flee from the noise of fear, they shall fall into a pit, and when they are in the pit striving to get our, and hoping to finde deliv-

rance

rance, then they fall into a snare, which is a worse evil than the pit; he that falls into a pit, may make some shift to get out again; but he that is in a snare, is bound fast, he can get no further, *1/a. 24. 18.* Thus the wicked mans case is worse and worse, all his remedies prove remediless, and all his helpers are miserable comforters. God is against them, and therefore salvation is far from them, *Psal. 119. 155.* and if *Jonah* will flee from God, he shall fall into the Sea. There is no escaping when God pursues, when he will destroy, none shall be able to deliver, *Psal. 21. 8. & 139. 7. to 11. Jer. 4. 16, 17. Amos 2. 14, 15, 16. Obad. 4.* He hath many under officers to arrest us, *Exek. 14. 13.* so that there is no escaping his hand, *Job 10. 7.* No power nor policy can save us from his wrath, *Prov. 21. 30.* No place can hide us from his All-seeing-eye, nor secure us from his All-mighty-hand, as appears in the next verses.

See Mr. Jenkins  
on Jude 14.  
Obf. 2. p. 204.  
folio.

## VERSE 2.

*Though they dig into Hell, thence shall mine hand take them, though they climb up to Heaven, thence will I bring them down.*

THESE Apostatizing Israelites being puff-up with their Priviledges, conceiving that God loved them, because he had given them some success and victories; hereupon they grew secure and impenitent, promising themselves impunity in their sins, which makes the Prophet here to thunder out Gods dreadful judgements against them with vehemency and variety of words, and to use very lofty and hyperbolical expressions, the better to awaken them, and drive them out of their vain conceits. In the end of the fore-going verse he had shewed them, that *though they fled, yet they should not escape;* and this he proves in the three following verses, by a notable enumeration of five particular places, thereby shewing them that they should

1. In Hell.
2. In Heaven.
3. In the tops of inaccessible Mountains.
4. In the bottome of the Sea.
5. In captivity and banishment out of their own

own



own Land, yet there the Lord would command the sword, and it should slay them. They should be safe neither at home, nor abroad, neither in their own Country, nor yet in a strange Land: so sad it is for a people to have God for their enemy.

1. The first means whereby they thought to hide themselves from Gods revenging hand, was by digging and *taking great pains* to hide themselves as low as Hell. We have the same word used, *Jonah* 1. 13. where the Mariners are said to row hard, to save *Jonah*, the word is *Jachtern*, they digged in the Sea by rowing, that is, they used the utmost means to save him.

*Quest. The Question will be, What is here meant by Hell and Heaven?*

*Ans.* 1. Some take the words literally, thus, If it were possible for these incorrigible sinners to descend into Hell, or ascend up into Heaven, yet Gods hand of Justice should finde them out in the one, and cast them out of the other.

2. Others take the words in an Hyperbolical sense, thus, By *Hell*, they understand the most abstruse, deep, secret places of the earth. The word *Sheol*, hath many significations.

See the word  
*Sheol* opened  
by Dr. Rivers,  
on *Psal.* 16. 10.  
and Caryl on  
*Job* 7. 9. p. 615.  
*Sheol* hic pro  
semita terra po-  
natur. Calvin.

1. Sometimes 'tis put for the grave, *Gen.* 37. 35. *Psal.* 16. 10. 2. Sometimes 'tis put for Hell it self, as *Job* 11. 8. & 26. 6. 3. Here it signifies the lowest part of the earth, and nearest to the center.

q. d. *Though these wicked men should dig ditches or pits never so deep in the earth to hide themselves, so that they should get almost as low as Hell, yet this digging and delving should not avail them, nor be able to shelter them from Gods wrath; for even thence would God take them, and deliver them into their enemies hands to be slain. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering,* *Job* 26. 6. *Prov.* 15. 11. Let *Adam* hide himself amongst the trees, and *Jonah* lye never so close to the sides of the ship, yet Gods Almighty hand found out both the one and the other.

3. If this will not do, and Hell will afford no help, they'll climbe to *Heaven*, and try what that will do, but all in vain; for thence will God cast them down, that the *Assyrian* may slay them. The like Hyperbolical speeches of mounting up to Heaven, we read of, *Gen.* 11. 4. *Deut.* 1. 28. *Job* 20. 6. *Jer.* 49. 16. & 51. 53. *Obad.* 4.

Verf. 2. of the Prophecy of Amos.

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Some by *Heaven* understand high and lofty Refuges and Towers, whose tops seemed to touch the Heavens. *q. d. Let these wicked men seek for refuge in Heaven or Hell, above or beneath, in Sea or Land, yet they shall not secure them in this day of wrath; all their hearts, their holes, and hiding-places are naked before the eyes of him with whom they have to do.*

OBSERVATIONS.

1. *When God is against a people, no place can shelter them from his wrath.*

If men sin against the Lord, let them go whither they will, the punishment of their sin will finde them out, *Numb. 32. 23* 28. Though insolent *Edom* make his nest in the Stars, and think himself out of Gun-shot, and free from danger, yet his sins will bring him down, *Obad. 4.* God hath a sharp eye, and a strong hand to pull men out of their strong holds, or to destroy them in them. *Zimri* got into *Tirzah* a fortified City, and then into the Kings Palace, and there he burnt himself to death, *1 King. 16. 8.* Had we all the power and policy of all the Kingdomes of the Earth for us, yet if God be against us, these cannot help us, *Amos 2. 14, 15, 16.* Though the wicked mount on high, yet at last hee casts them down to the ground, *Psal. 147. 6.* 'Tis not height nor depth, Sea or Land, Heaven or Hell that can shelter us from Gods fury. If God be against us, all the elements, and all the creatures are against us. As when God is for us, all are for us, *Rom. 8. 31.* and we need not fear, *Psal. 27. 1. & 56. 4. Isa. 43. 1, 2.*

There is no flying from Gods Arrests, if a man have done wickedly in one place, he may escape the Law by flying to another, he may get out of our bounds, and then he is safe; but who can get out of Gods bounds? he hath power to arrest us where ever he findes us, and he can finde us where ever we are. He is higher than Heaven, and deeper than Hell, and therefore *David* cries out, *Whither shall I go from thy presence?* Surely no whither. Neither men nor Devils are able to go, from the common and general presence of God, for he fills Heaven and Earth. *Psal. 139. 7. to 13.* is a kinde of Comment on this Text, and therefore I shall briefly open it, *verf. 7.*

Xxx

Whither

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*Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? what's that? why he tells you in the next clause, Whither shall I flee from thy presence? q. d. Thou art an infinite Spirit, and I can go no where to avoid or escape thee, Vers. 8. If I ascend into Heaven, thou art there; By Heaven is meant the upper Region of the world, and if I make my bed in Hell, and go down to the lowest parts of the earth, behold thou art there, q. d. Let mee go whither I will, thy presence will finde mee out.*

*Vers. 9. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the utmost parts of the world, q. d. should I fly never so early or swiftly from East to West, as the light of the morning doth, vers. 10. Even there should thy hand lead mee, and thy right hand should hold mee; q. d. I should still lye under thy divine disposing and government, and finde thee efficaciously present with mee.*

*Vers. 11. If I say the darkness shall cover mee, viz. so as thou shalt not be able to finde mee out, then is the night light about mee, that is, I shall be as little hid from thine eyes, as if 'twere noon day; why so? vers. 12. for the darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day, darkness and light are both alike to thee, Job 34. 11, 12.*

#### VERSE. 30.

*And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence, and though they be hid from my sight in the bottome of the Sea, thence will I command the Serpent, and he shall bite them.*

**T**He men of *Israel* and *Judah* being fortiff and sensual, and drowned in deep security, resting upon their carnal confidences, and resolving to fly to them instead of God: The holy Ghost (who knows our indurate frames better than we our selves) multiplies words, and as Fishers when they would catch Fish, drive them out of their holds; so the Lord here labours to drive them out of all their strong holds, to himself. Having therefore shewed them that Heaven and Hell could afford them no security, he comes now to stop a third gap, by which they might think to escape, viz. by flying to Rocks, and inaccessible Mountains. But, though they hide them-

themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence, and deliver them into their enemies hands.

There were two Carmels. The one was in Judea, as appears, *Josh. 15. 55. 1 Sam. 25. 2.* the other in the Text was an high, pleasant, fruitful Mountain in Canaan, good for Pasture, and therefore is used in Scripture sometimes Largely, for any fertile place; so *Isa. 29. 17. Jer. 2. 7. Amos 1. 2.* I brought you into a plentiful Country, or as it is in the fountain, I brought you into a Land of Carmel. So *Cant. 7. 5.*

2. 'Tis taken strictly, for that famous, fruitful Mountain, which is joyned with *Bashan* another fruitful hill, *Isa. 33. 9.* This Carmel had a City on it, or joyning to it, and was situate by the Sea, *Jer. 46. 18.* Here *Elijah* vanquish the worshippers of *Baal*, *1 King. 18. 19.* and *Elisha* dwelt here, *2 King. 4. 25.* By Carmel here is meant Synecdochically, very high hills, and inaccessible Rocks and Mountains, for in those times, and in those Countries, when they were in great danger, they were wont to run and hide themselves in Mountains, in Caves, in Rocks, in Pits, and high places, as appears, *Judg. 6. 2. 1 Sam. 13. 6. Isa. 2. 10, 19. Jer. 4. 29.* But in vain do men run to these hills and holds for refuge, for if God be not our strong hold, they are but miserable shelters, and we may say of them, as *Job* said of his friends, *A miserable comforters are ye all.* We read of five Kings that hid themselves in a cave, yet were they all taken and hanged, *Josh. 10. 16, 23.* *Titus* and *Vespasian* besieging *Jerusalem*, found many of the Jews hid in Vaults and Privy-houses, and other obscure places, where they were slain. Those that sin against the Lord, let them go to the very head and top of Carmel to hide themselves, yet there will the Lord search for them, and bring them forth to Judgement. Mountains are Gods servants as well as other creatures, yea they melt like wax at his presence, so that although wicked men should beg of them to fall upon them, and hide them, they cannot, they dare not do it, *Rev. 6. 15, 16, 17.*

'Tis true, *David* oft made use of Mountains and Caves, but he never trusted in them, but made the Lord his Rock and Refuge, *Psal. 18. 2.* and the best of Saints have hid themselves as occasion required. But for impenitent sinners to think to hide themselves from Gods hand and eye, is gross Atheism and madness.

*Obj.* But if we cannot hide our selves in Mountains, we will try what the deeps will do.

*Ans.* You may do so, but it shall be in vain, for though they hide themselves from my sight, in the bottom of the Sea, that is, though they think they have hid themselves from my sight, so that I cannot see nor finde them; for no man can actually hide himself from God, who is omnipresent, but only opinatively, and in his own conceit.

*Karkā, Pavimentum, fundum, solum.*

'Tis an Hyperbole, q. d. if it were possible for these wicked men to go to the very bottom and Pavement of the Sea to hide themselves from mine eye and Ire; yet there mine eye would see them, and my hand should reach them, for I have Serpents and Serjeants even there ready to arrest them, and fulfil my commands.

*Thence will I command the Serpent and he shall bite them.*

*Nechash, Serpens. Syn. Gen.*

*Atindabo monstrum alicui marino, quibus Hebraei & Chaldei Serpentum & Draconum appellant.*

*nomine, per calā monstra reges crudeles intelliguntur. Psal. 74. 14. Grotius.*

By Serpent here is not meant a Land-Serpent, but a Sea-Serpent, as the Crocodile, or the Leviathan, that is, the Whale, or some such great Sea-monster, for so we finde the Whale in Job 26. 13. called the crooked or piercing-Serpent. God hath many Serpents at command. He hath Serpents *Natural*, to bite and devour us, and Serpents *Metaphorical*, as the Devil and his Agents, he hath the *Assyrian* and *Babylonian* here to devour *Israel* and *Judab*.

*q. d. Which way soever these wicked men go, death and destruction shall finde them out, all shall make against them both by Sea and Land, and the Assyrian my Rod and Executioner shall finde and ferret them out in all places where ever they be.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. God hath variety of Servants and Serjeants to arrest his enemies where ever they be.

All the Elements, and all the Creatures are enemies to those that are enemies to God. He hath Armies at Sea and Land against them. He hath not onely Serpents *Metaphorical*, the Devil and his Instruments, *Rev. 12. 9.* but also *natural* Serpents, and Sea-monsters innumerable, ready to execute his

his commands on his enemies. God is the best friend, and the saddest foe. If he be against us, he is an Omnipresent enemy, and can pursue us by Sea and Land; for he is every where by his Essence, Presence and Power. He is God above all, through all, and in us all, *Job* 11. 8, 9. *Ephes.* 4. 6. He is over all by his Power, in all the Saints by his Spirit, and through all the world by his providence. He is an Omnipresent Essence and Being, *Prov.* 15. 3. There is no hiding our selves in secret from him, *Jer.* 23. 23, 24. He is in *Heaven* by his glory and Majesty; in *Hell* by his justice, wrath and power; in Sea and Land by his providence, *Alt.* 17. 27.

Take heed then of displeasing him, other enemies you may flye from; but there is no flying from his presence. Walk therefore sincerely as in his eye, as *Enoch*, *Noah*, and *Abraham* did. *Seneca* counselled his scholars to do all, *tanquam spectat Cato*, as if some severe *Cato* did alwaies behold them. But we should rather do all, *tanquam spectat Deus*, remembering his All-seeing eye is still upon us. This is an excellent preservative against sin. This kept *Joseph* chaste, *Gen.* 39. 9. and *Job* and *David*, pure, *Job* 31. 4. *Psal.* 119. 136. I have kept all thy precepts, why so? *because all my waies are before thee*, *Neb.* 4. 13.

ψ. 139. 7.

See this point excellently enlarged, by Mr. Caryl on *Job* 22. 12. p. 108. to 115. and Mr. Love on *1 Chro.* 16. 9.

'Tis meer Atheism, and the want of consideration of that All-seeing eye of God, which is the root of all the villany that is acted in the world, *Psal.* 94. 5, 6, 8. *Ezek.* 9. 9. As *Nimrod* was said to be a mighty hunter before the Lord; so many may be said, to be mighty drunkards, mighty swearers, lyars, cheaters, dissemblers, &c. before the Lord. But let it alwaies be our care to lead a life worthy of such a presence, passing the time of our sojourning in Gods fear. This may be 1. A spur to duty, 2. A motive to Sincerity, 3. A corrosive to sin, 4. A cordial in afflictions. Remember in all thy distresses, hee is an Omnipresent friend. He was with *Joseph* in the prison, with *Jeremy* in the dungeon, with *Jonah* in the Whales belly, with *Daniel* in the Lions den, with *Israel* in *Egypt*, *Exod.* 3. 9. and with *Paul* before *Nero*, *2 Tim.* 4. 17. He knows our Temptations, our adversaries, our abilities, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength, *Rev.* 2. 3.



## VERSE 4.

*And though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them, and I will set mine eye upon them for evil, and not for good.*

WE are now come to the fifth and last Evazion, whereby these incorrigible sinners thought to escape Gods hands, and that was by yeelding themselves up into their enemies hands upon quarter for their lives, and so to escape the edge of the sword.

To this the Lord answers by way of concession, though they should go into captivity before their enemies, or before the faces of their enemies (as 'tis in the Original) whose custome it was to drive their enemies like beasts before them, young and old, naked and barefoot, *Isa. 20. 4. Lam. 1. 5.* yet thence will I command and commission the sword of their enemies to slay them.

2. Here is an Aggravation of all this misery, *viz.* that it should fall upon them in wrath. God promised to send *Judah* into the Land of *Chaldea* for good, *Jer. 24. 5, 6.* but *Israel* being more grossly wicked, the Lord threatens here, *To watch over them for evil, and not for good.* The expression is emphatical, the denial of the contrary makes the speech more weighty, so *Jer. 21. 10. & 39. 16. & 44. 27. q. d.* I will bring upon them all manner of evil, but no good. I will afflict them every where, but I will defend them no where, but will utterly consume them. This was true of *Israel*, who went into captivity, and never returned again; though many of *Judah* did return again, as we read in the book of *Ezra*.

As Gods eye was formerly upon them for good, and hee had made them the head of the Nations, so now his eye should be upon them for evil, and he would make them the Taile and contemptible amongst all. He would now deal with them as he threatened to do with disobedient ones, *Deut. 28. 44, 63.* Before he had been their Guardian, and their Keeper, *Psal. 121. 3, 4.* He that keeps *Israel* neither slumbers nor sleeps; but now he will be their Judge and Executioner. Though formerly he

*Negatio illa, Et non in bonum, Magnam habet auxilium, q. d. N'l boni, sed omnia malum iis asseram & infam. à L'ipide.*

he seriously and intensively set himself to do them good, yet now with as much seriousness and resolvedness he will set his eyes upon them, or against them for evil.

By the *Eye of God* is meant the Providence of God, by an Anthropopathy frequent in Scripture, *Job* 34. 21. *Prov.* 15. 3. *Psal.* 33. 18. & 34. 15. *1 Pet.* 3. 12. which as it watcheth over the good in mercy, so it watcheth over the wicked in judgement, *vers.* 8.

*I will set mine eye upon them for evil;* that is, for punishment, and for destruction, *and not for good;* that is, not to do them any good at all, nor to bless them.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *Submission to men is but vain, unless we submit unto God.*

To yeeld our selves captives to men; and make peace with them, and yet to rebel against God, is to see the Sergeant, and to lye open to the fury of the Creditor. Wicked men begin at the wrong end, they should first begin with God, and humble themselves before him, and make peace with him and then all would be at peace with them, *Job* 5. 23. *Hos.* 1. 18. When once our wayes please God, he makes our enemies to be at peace with us, *Prov.* 16. 7. He can over-rule their hearts, so that although they hate us, yet they shall not hurt us; yea with *Esau*, they shall kiss us, instead of killing us, *Gen.* 33. 4.

2. *The sword hath its command and commission from God,* *Jer.* 47. 6. *Ezek.* 14. 17. *I will command the sword, and it shall slay them.*

War is one of Gods sore Judgements, it is the Arrow which he shoots at a rebellious people. But of this at large before on *Amos* 4. 10.

3. *The Providence of God watcheth over the wicked for their hurt.*

As the eyes of his Providence run to and fro through the whole world for the good of his people (*2 Chron.* 16. 9. *Psal.* 33. 18. and 34. 15. *1 Pet.* 3. 12.) so where ever the wicked go, his eye and his hand follow them for evil, *Jer.* 14. 16. 17. 18. 22. and 24. 9. As all works together for good to good men, so all works for evil to evil men. The Lord doth even

even study their ruine, and purposely watch (as 'twere) all opportunities to do them a mischief.

As men do 'obstinately set their faces against Gods Commandements in a way of rebellion; so he will set his face against them for evil in a way of destruction, *Jer. 44. 12.* Hence we read so oft of Gods setting his face against wicked men, *Lev. 20. 3.* and *26. 17.* *Ezek. 14. 8.* *I will set my face against them,* that is, I am highly offended with them, and I will make it my work to execute my vengeance on them.

### VER. 3.

*And the Lord God of Hosts is he that toucheth the Land and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein shall mourn, and it shall rise up wholly like a flood, and shall be drowned as by the flood of Egypt.*

**W**E have done with the Commination, we are now come to the second general part of the Chapter, and that is *the confirmation of the Commination*, which is drawn from the Omnipotent Majesty and Power of God, who is Lord Paramount of all the world, the glorious Creator and Governour of all. All depend upon him, and observe his beck, what he sayes it is done (*ejus dicere est facere*) and what he threatens is as easily and speedily effected.

The better therefore to awaken these drowsie sinners, and make them fear, the Prophet here sets forth the Majesty and Power of God, that they might see there was no contending with him, and that he was able, and would certainly bring to pass what ever he had threatened against them. To this end we often finde *Moses* and the Prophets setting forth the Majesty of God by his Titles & Works, as that he is *the Mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the King of Kings, &c.* Sinners are hardly drawn to consider the Glory and Majesty of that God with whom they have to do, and therefore the Prophet so oft toucheth on this string, *Amos 3. 6. 8.* and *4. ult.* and *5. 8, 9.*

In this Verse, and the next, we have an elegant description of Gods Power and Glory (where every word hath its weight) And that By his Names and Titles, He is *the Lord, Jehovah*, the Creator and Preserver of all things; and there-

fore

fore his Threatnings ought not to be contemned.

2 He is the Lord of Hosts, he hath the superiour and inferior Armies of Heaven and Earth, of Sea and Land, as it were horse and foot to march against his enemies.

3 His Almighty Works set forth his Majesty and Power.

1 The Earth which is in it self a most solid, firm, hard, immoveable body, yet acknowledgeth the Power and Dominion of its Almighty Lord and Creator; and therefore if he do but touch it (at least with any of his rods, and in displeasure) it presently melts like wax before the fire, or snow before the Sun. 2 If he be provoked to anger, he can make a sinful land to mourn, by bringing upon them the punishment due to them for their sins; he can make both things and persons melt. *Tamog, proprie significat li- quescere, resolu- tis, ut cera ad ignem.* Therefore fear to offend him; this must be annexed to every branch of this description of God, *g.* He is Jehovah the Lord of Hosts, therefore fear him. He makes the earth to melt, and the inhabitants thereof to tremble, therefore do you humble your selves before him. 3 If all this will not work upon you, yet consider he can drown you, and make his floods to go over all the land, as he did in Noah's time, and as he doth in many Islands, and other places at this day. See before Chap. 8.8.

4 If ye will not fear him for his Majesty, and Power that appears on earth, then look up to the heavens, vers. 6. and see his Wisdom and Power there, in creating the several Regions of the air, as so many stories one above another, besides the variety of creatures which he hath on earth, as so many Troops ready prest to do him service; and his sending of the waters of the Sea upon the earth, either by rain, or inundation to punish it. These all shew the Power and Glory of that God with whom we have to do, and therefore should make us fear to offend him, and speedily to make our peace with him.

The summe of all is this, *Hitherto ye have trusted in your own strength and priviledges, and have set light by Gods Threatnings, as if they had been but so many scar-crows; but now consider, O ye infirm, and sinful dust and ashes, against whom do ye rebel; against whom do ye thus harden your selves? Is it not against the great and mighty God, the Lord of Hosts, the Creator of all things, whose Almighty power appears in that*

with a touch he can make the mighty and massy earth to melt and dissolve like wax before a mighty fire, and fill it with such horror, that all the inhabitants thereof shall mourn, and make it as inhabitable as if it were drowned with a flood.

## OBSERVATIONS.

See Trap on  
Mal. 3. 17.

1 God is the Lord of Hosts. See before Amos 4. ult.  
2 He is an Almighty God. See before Amos 4. ult.  
Obs. 1.

3 If God do but touch the earth, or its inhabitants in wrath, they melt, and mourn, and fade away.

If he but touch Mountains *Natural*, or Mountains *Metaphorical*, there is no abiding.

1 The earth *Natural* quakes at Gods displeasure, the Rocks and Hills melt at his presence, 1 Sam. 22. 8. Psal. 18. 7. and 144. 3, 6, 7. The massy Mountains which no art or wit of man can move, yet Gods bare presence, how much more his wrathful presence makes them tremble as Mount *Sinai* did at the presence of the Lord, Exod. 19. 18. Judg. 5. 5. Job 9. 6. Psal. 68. 8. Hab. 3. 10.

See Caryl on  
Job 9. 6. p. 184.

2 The earth *Metaphorical*; that is, wicked men that live in the earth, the guilt of their sins doth so daunt them that they are not able to stand in Gods presence, Ezra 9. ult. Adam when he had sinned, hides himself from God, and Cain runs from his presence. Especially at the day of Judgement they will not be able to stand before Gods Tribunal, Psal. 1. 5. but will cry to Rocks and Mountains to hide them, and shall be driven to utter desperation, when they think of that dreadful sentence, *Go ye cursed*; yea when the Lord appears for his people here, these *Metaphorical Mountains* shall be dissolved, and melt like wax before the fire. The Churches enemies are oft compared to Mountains Isa. 64. 1. Zac. 4. 7.  
1 Because Mountains are higher than other parts of the earth, so are the wicked puffed up with pride, and think themselves higher than God himself, and therefore they set their mouths against the Heavens and blaspheme him, Psal. 73. 9.  
2 Mountains hinder us in our way. 3 They are barren, it is the low Valleys that are fruitful.

See Caryl on  
Job 30. 12. p.  
108, 109.

The Church being troubled with these Mountains, seeks to  
re-

remove them, by that Omnipotent Engine of Prayer, *Iſa. 64.*

1, 2. *Ob that thou wouldeſt rend the Heavens and come down!*

what then? why the Mountains, that is, the Princes and Potentates of the world, that now are puſt up with ſucceſs, oppoſing and oppreſſing the people of God, ſhould melt at thy preſence, and vaniſh to nothing.

*Montes ſunt  
Principes &  
Potestates mun-  
di, qui pluſ-  
quam ferrei ſunt  
cum ſentiunt*

*ſucceſſum; at cum Deus viſitat eos, ſunt molliores aqua; contemnunt Deum ut infimum, quod ſicut mus in antro, ita ille in Templo lateat; ſed age & oſtende anguſtiorẽ ſedem. utinam diſcinderes cælum, & deſcenderes. Luther in Iſa. 64. 1.*

When God ariſeth, then the Dukes of *Edom* are amazed, and trembling takes hold on the mighty ones, *Exod. 15. 15, 16.* Hence 'tis that the Church deſires that God would ariſe, for then his enemies ſhould be ſcattered, and thoſe that hate him ſhould flee before him, and be driven away like ſmoke (which the higher it riſeth, the more 'tis ſcattered) and melt like wax before the fire, *Pſal. 68. 1, 2.* The Sons of *Zerviah* may be too ſtrong for *David*, but not for the God of *David*. If he do but touch theſe Mountains, they vaniſh. 'Tis no trouble to us to breathe; why God can with as great facility overthrow the Churches enemies, one blaſt, breath, word, or look from him, undoes them, *Job 4. 9, 10, 11.* By the blaſt of God they periſh, and by the breath of his noſtrils are they conſumed. And if the Earth melt and tremble when God is angry, how ſad is the condition of hard-hearted ſinners, who are viler than the Earth, and more inſenſible than the very ſenſeleſſe and inanimate creatures, yea worſe than the very Devils themſelves, for they beleave and tremble! *James 2. 19.*

4. The Lord can turn our Land into a Sea, and make our arable, failable; ſo that there ſhall be no dwelling in it; but it ſhall riſe up wholly as a flood, and ſhall be drowned as by the flood of *Egypr*. The water is naturally above the earth, ſo that he can float it and flood it at his pleaſure; and can eaſily pull up his fluces, and let in the Sea upon us, and bury us in one, univerſal grave of waters. Let us then fear to provoke him, who hath Wind and Sea at command againſt us. The Lord wonders that any ſhould be ſo ſortiſh, as not to fear him upon this very account, *Jer. 5. 22.* Fear ye not mee, ſaith the Lord, who have placed the Sand for a bound to the Sea, that it cannot paſs? q. d. Whom will ye fear, if ye will not fear mee? when the Sea it ſelf, that terrible and tumultuous creature



feareth and obeyeth; and who have made the weak sands to bound the raging Sea. We are bound to bless God that hath thus bounded that unruly element, and saith to it, *Hitherto shalt thou go, and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be staid,* Job 38. 11, 12.

## VERSE 6.

*It is he that buildeth his stories in the Heavens, and hath founded his troop in the Earth; hee that calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the Earth; The Lord is his Name.*

**T**He Prophet goes on in a magnificent description of the Wisdome, Power, Majesty, and Glory of the great *Jehovah*, that so this stubborn people, considering with whom they had to do, might tremble at his Threatnings, and prepare to meet him in a way of humiliation, who was now marching against them with his troops for their destruction.

Before he had set forth Gods All-mighty Power in ruling *the Earth and the Rivers*, now he proceeds to set forth his Majesty in the creating of the Heavens, of the inferiour Armies and the Seas.

And since the bare naming of God is little regarded by most men, therefore this blunt, rustick Prophet raiseth his stile, grows Rhetorical and Philosophical, setting forth Gods excellency with variety of words, the better to affect his Hearers.

*Quot tituli, tot  
sententiæ.*

In this Ver. we have { 1. The Stories of Heaven.  
the glory of God { 2. His Troops on Earth.  
set forth to us in his { 3. The Rain out of the Sea.  
forming & framing { 4. By his tremendous Name, *Jehovah*.

The words are very Mystical and difficult, they have almost as many Expositions as there be Expositors. I shall endeavour to clear the way, and lay a good foundation, the building will stand the better.

*He buildeth his stories in the Heavens.*

The first Query. will be, What is meant here by *the stories of Heaven*? *Answ.*

*Ans.* By *Heaven* here is meant, the *Aire*; hence the birds are called the souls of Heaven, and by *Stories* are meant, the heavenly Sphears or Orbs, which are distinct *ascents* (as 'tis *Magnolatan*, in the Original) and *Stories* one above another. We read of *ascensiones suos; vel gradus suos; à Gualah*

*ascendit.* The Sphears being one above another, are elegantly called *Stories*.

1. There is the *Aerial Heaven*, which reacheth from us to the Stars, in which there are three Regions.

2. There is the *Starry Heaven*, which hath eight Sphears (which who lifts may finde set down in a known Author.) Mr. Leighs Body of Divinity, l. 3. c. 3. p. 235, &c. Polan. Syntag. l. 5 c. 8. 9.

3. There is the *Heaven of Heavens*, or the third Heaven *2 Cor. 12. 2.* The first of these is for my *Sustentation*, I live and breathe in it. The second is for my *Contemplation*, I see and admire it; and the third is my *Expectation*, I long and wait for it.

By this most admirable and excellent work of God, in making the Heavens, which consist of so many Sphears, and have a certain order within themselves, and are as it were so many steps and stairs by which we ascend *gradatim*, till we come to the Heaven of Heavens, the Prophet labours to awaken these secure sinners. This is the first Glass in which we may clearly see the Majesty of God, *Job 37. 18.*

*And hath founded his Troop in the Earth.*

The word which we render *Troop*, signifies not onely a Troop, as appears by that parallel place, *2 Sam. 2. 25.* *The children of Benjamin gathered themselves together after Abner, and became. Laaguddab* (the very word in the Text) *one Troop*; or were gathered round together like a *Globe*. 2. The word also signifies a little *Bundle*; So *Isa. 58. 6.* *Undo the heavy burdens, or undo the bundels or fardels.* *Agudda, fasciculus, conglobatio, turma, à Gudab, colligere.*

1. Some by a Troop understand the other three Elements of Fire, Air, Water; which are all bound up as 'twere in one bundle, and founded upon the Earth, which is the basis and centre of them all. Hence the *Geneva* render it, He hath laid the foundation of his *Globe* of Elements in the Earth. Those three Elements are opposite to the heavenly sphears, *q. d.* as God hath built the glorious sphears of Heaven, so he hath founded the terrestrial Sphears and Elements in the Earth, out

of which he hath formed and framed all other things; uniting them in a due series and order, and binding them up as it were in one bundle, the Elements lying like globes or bundles, one upon, or over one another.

*Hic designantur  
hominum & re-  
rum creaturarum  
turma à Domi-  
no Zebaoth ita  
comparata, ut  
quotumque velit  
promptissimi exequantur  
judicia Dei, ideoque  
dicuntur cuneus Dei super  
terram fundatus, i. e. firmissime  
constitutus. Sebindler.*

2. Others conceive, that by a *Troop* here, is meant all kinds of creatures, which are as so many Troops on Earth to serve God; hence he is so oft called, *The Lord of Hosts*, and these are called *His Troops*, because he is the Author and the Orderer of their Motion, *q. d.* As the Lord hath built the several Congignations of his Orbs in the Heavens, so he hath provided Armies of creatures to do his will on Earth.

3. Others conceive it to be the whole frame of the world, which compared with Gods Immensity, is but a little *Bundle* or fardel, yea an empty nothing, *Isa. 40. 17.*

*Tam sublimi &  
magno opifici,  
totus orbis nil  
nisi fasciculus  
& res minuta.  
Mercer.*

2. As in a Bundle there are many things wrapt up together, so in this terrestrial Globe, there are variety of creatures, of different kinds and natures, all setting forth their creators praise.

*He calleth for the waters of the Sea, and poureth them  
out on the face of the Earth.*

Here is a third thing wherein the All-mighry Power of God appears, and that is in the generating of rain. By the heat of the Sun he draws up vapours out of the Salt-Sea, into the middle Region of the Aire, where they condense into clouds, and then dissolves them into showers of fresh water for the use and service of man.

He calls for the waters of the Sea, either for Inundation, as (some conceive) to overflow a Land, *q. d.* 'tis the Lord, that by his command lets loose the waters of the Sea to destroy his enemies. But most genuinely it is applied to the generating of the Rain. He calls for the waters out of the Sea, unto the upper Region of the Air by the Sun beams, that he may powre them down again upon the face of the Earth. See the same expression before, *Amos 5. 8.*

'Tis true, the Rain is generated by Vapours that ascend out of the Earth, yet because the Sea doth concur with its Vapours

pours also, therefore the generation of the Rain is likewise ascribed to it; and herein also the All-mighty Power of God is seen, that can at a beck call for the Rain, and suddenly the clouds cover the face of the heavens over our heads; this shews the incomparable Power of God, that can in a trice make such a change.

Lastly, If you desire to know who 'tis that doth all those great and glorious things, I will tell you in a word, 'Tis the great Jehovah, that is his Name. This is the most proper Name of God (as I have shewed before, Amos 4. ult.) and notes his eternal essence, who gives being to all things, and to you, O Israelites, amongst the rest, and therefore there is no hiding your selves from him, nor dallying with him who is All-mighty, and hath his Troops in Heaven, in Earth, and in the Sea against you.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Omnipotence and Majesty of God doth wonderfully appear in the Heavens, the Sea, the Rain, &c.

As the Heavens, so all creatures do declare Gods glory, Psal. 19. 1. We should therefore study the book of the creatures, that we may learn to fear, serve, trust, love and admire the Lord for his greatness and goodness.

See before Amos 4. ult.

See Mr. Patrick on Micah 6. 8.

p. 12, 13, &c.

We have but two books chiefly to study, The first is the Book of Nature, or the works of God, and this we have set forth, Psal. 19. 1. to 7. 2. The Book of God, the holy Scriptures, Psal. 19. 7. to 12. We should not lightly think of Gods wondrous works, but seriously consider them, Psal. 46. 8. for this end he hath given us our judgements, and an understanding faculty that we might be enabled to consider his works, and this is the great end why he made the world, and adorned it with such variety of creatures, viz. that by beholding them we might be quickned to praise the giver of them, Prov. 16. 4. God will destroy such as consider not his works, Psal. 28. 5.

Mundus est Dei patris ad genus humanum Epistola. Plato.

Much of God may be seen in the creature; His Wisdom, Power, Goodness and Bounty are all written (as it were) in Capital Letters, so that he who runs may read them, for the invisible things of God may be seen in them, Rom. 1. 20. Cuiuswell Spi.

As the Rivers lead us to the Sea, so these Rivers of Good-Opticks. p. 516.

nelle

ness and excellency which lye scattered in the creature, must lead us to their Creator, in whom are all those Excellencies by way of eminency.

[See the *Spiritual improvement of the creature*, in D. Tho. Taylor at the end of his Treatise of Repent. Church his *Miscellan.* p. 161, &c. Caryl on Job 14. 8. Polany *Syntag. lib. 5. cap. 4, 5, 7.* Woodward Childs *Portion*, chap. 7. p. 90. Mr. Austin his *Spiritual use of Orchards and Gardens*, 2 Part.]

2 Obf. *All creatures are Gods Troop.*

If he do but call for Fire, Water, Hail, Frost, Snow, &c. they promptly obey the word of his Command, *Psal. 147. 15, 16, 17, 18. Isa. 40. 26.* and *48. 13. Ezek. 36. 29. Hag. 1. 11.*

3 Obf. *All the world compared with God, is but a bundle.*

Yea it is not *fascis*, but *fasciculus*, a very little bundle. This the Prophet *Isaiah*, ch. 40. 12, 15, 16, 17. sets forth in most lively, Rhetorical colours, he speaks so fully to this point, that I shall not enlarge upon it. He proves Gods Omnipotency by his Works, he names but three, vers. 12.

} The Sea,  
viz. } The Heavens,  
      } The Earth.

1 For the *Sea*, it is to the Lord but as an handful of water is to us, and therefore he is said to measure or weigh the waters of the Sea in his fist, or in the hollow of his hand.

2 For the *Heavens*, they are but a *span* with him, look how easily we span a thing which we would measure, with far more ease doth the Lord mete out the height and latitude of the Heavens. He metes out the Heavens with a span, or takes the measure of them with a span.

3 As for the *Earth* he makes nothing of it. *He comprehends its dust in a measure*; in a Tierce or Triental, that is, in some small Vessel, holding some proportion with the fist and the span. He doth this great work with three fingers as it were he puts not his whole hand to it, but as we weigh some small matter with three fingers, so doth he do this great work with great ease.

*He weighs the Mountains in scales, and the Hills in a balance.* The greatest Mountains are no more to him than an ordinary weight is to one of us. All this bespeaks Gods Omnipotency,

*Triental, est  
tertius pars me-  
suræ duodecim  
sythorum. Nos  
minutissimum  
intelligimus,  
quod tribus di-  
gitis possit com-  
prehendi. Scul-  
ptura.*

niporency that can form and proportion our such vast creatures with so much facility and ease, as if he were but spanning, measuring, weighing of them.

Yet he hath not done. *vers. 15.* he goes on to set forth the transcendent Glory and Majesty of God. *Behold the Nations are but as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance.* All Nations, all Asia, Affrica, Europe, and America, compared with the Almighty, are meer nothing, they are but as a drop that falls from a full bucket, or as a small drop that carrieth behinde in the bucket when the water is powred out, which doth not diminish the measure; or like the small dust of the ballance, which remains in the ballance when powder or beaten spice hath been weighed in it, which is easily blown away with a little puff of wind, or such small dust as hangs on the scales, without altering the weight.

*Ja. 40. 15.* 5

Yet more, *He taketh up the Isles as a very little thing.* They are to him but as so many atomes or mores which flye up and down in the Sun, or as a little thin beaten powder (as the word signifies) which is blown away with a blast. Islanders are apt to be secure and insolent, because they have the Sea to surround and secure them, but with God they are as a very little thing, which is easily overthrowen.

*Verf. 16. Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering, q. d.* so infinitely great is God, that if all the trees in Lebanon were fallen for fire, and all the beasts there were slain for a burnt offering, yet would it hold no proportion with the Dignity and Majesty of the Lord.

*Ja. 40. 16.* 5

*Verf. 17.* As if he could never magnifie God, and nullifie man sufficiently he tells us yet more, *That all Nations before him are nothing, less than nothing and vanity.* See what a heap of diminishing termes are here † Nations, all Nations compared with God, are *purum nihil*, nothing, less than nothing, vanity, yea lighter than vanity, *Psal. 62. 9.* Before he had compared the Nations to a drop, and a little small dust, but now hee goes further, and tells us, that *all Nations* compared with God, are *less than nothing.* Now if All Nations compared with God be thus contemptible, what is one Nation, or one great man in a Nation, yea or all the great *Zanximmims* of the world, compared with him? This

*Ja. 40. 17.* 5

See more in  
Mr. Cary's on  
Job 7. 16. p.  
644, 645, 646,  
&c.



may greatly comfort us when we lye oppressed by the great ones of the world, that though they be great, yet there is a greater than they; though they bee mighty, yet God is Almighty, and can with a word of his mouth confound them all.

4. *Rain is the gift of God.*

It is he that calls for the waters of the Sea, raiseth the vapours, condenseth them into clouds, and then shewes them down upon us. But of this at large before, *Amos 4.7.*

5. If you take this calling for the waters of the Sea for an inundation and drowning of a Land, then observe, *That God can make our Land, to become a Sea*, he can bring a flood upon us as he did on the old world. But of this before, *vers. 5. Obf. 4.*

6. *God is Jehovah.*

He onely is the true and living God, who hath his being in, and of himself, and gives being to all creatures. But of this before, *Amos 4. ult. Obf. 7.*

See Mr. Trap  
on Hof. 5. 12.

VERSE 7.

*Are ye not as children of the Ethiopian to me, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord? Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Captor, and the Syrians from Kir?*

**T**He Prophet goes on to confirm the certaintie of *Israels* destruction from the sinfulness of their condition; to this end, first, He labours to convince them of their Ingratitude and Apostasie; whereas the Lord had brought them in great mercy out of the land of *Egypt* where they lay buried (as it were) in a grave of misery, and made them his *Israel*, and peculiar people; yet they disingenuously behaved themselves more like Ethiopians and Heathens, than his beloved *Israel*, and therefore as they had been like them in sinning, so now they should be like them in suffering.

In this Verse the Prophet by a Protepsis prevents two Objections. 1. Whereas they boasted that they were Gods people in Covenant, and descended of holy Progenitors, and therefore God would not destroy them,

*A.* To this the Prophet answers, that in their wayes  
and

and walking they were more like to prophane, Heathenish, Idolatrous Ethiopians, who were strangers from the Covenant of Grace, and aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, than *Israelites*, or the seed of *Abraham* since they did not the works of *Abraham*, but of Infidels; and therefore since they had made themselves thus vile by their sins, God regarded them no more than the most contemptible Nations in the world, and was resolved to deal with them accordingly. The *Ethiopians* were a vile, accursed Nation, the symbole of servitude, *Gen. 9. 25.* Cursed be *Cham*, a servant of servants, i.e. a most vile slave let him be. Now from this *Cham* came *Canaan* and his brother *Chus*, who was the father of the *Ethiopians*; hence they are called *Chusim* (as in the Text) from *Cham* and *Chus*, *Gen. 10. 6.*

The Interrogation is a strong Affirmation, *Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopian to me? q.d.* Ye are so, there is an emphasis in that word *mihi*, to me; *q.d.* though ye excell other Nations in many priviledges, and are honoured by men, yet when you come before me, what can you bring that is not mine? all your feathers and favours are but borrowed, and when I have taken mine own from you, wherein are you better to me than *Ethiopians*, or the most vile and contemptible Nation in the world? In respect of Creation, and by nature we are all alike, both *Saints* and *Scythians*, *Israelites*, and *Ethiopians*, we all come out of the same corrupt mass, it is onely free-grace which makes the difference; and therefore the more God had done for *Israel*, the more humble and obedient they should have been. But since they forgot the God of their mercies, despised the counsel of his Prophets, and hardened themselves in their sins, the Lord tells them in plain termes, that now he esteemed them no more than the most base and barbarous Nations in the world; and this the Lord doth to abase them, and make them know themselves who were stult with such high conceits of themselves, and their priviledges, though they walked clean contrary to them; in which respect they were inferiour to Heathens, who never sinned against such light and love as they had done.

Obj. 2. A second Evasion was this, *The Lord hath chosen us for his own peculiar people, above all the Nations of the world, and hath delivered us from Egypt, and brought us into*

Canaan, and therefore (though we do go on in our sin, yet) we shall prosper, and no Judgement shall come upon us, as this precise Prophet Amos threatneth.

*Ans.* 1. It doth not follow, that because you have been delivered out of *Egypt*, that therefore you shall go unpunished for your sin; but the contrary, since you have received such great blessings, therefore you must yeeld answerable obedience, remembring that they which have much, of them shall be much required; and if they offend, they shall be sooner, and more severely punished, *Amos 3.2. Dan. 9. 12.* 2. The Prophet tells them, that they had no reason to be puffed up with this deliverance, for the Lord had granted the like external deliverances (though not alike in all circumstances to that of *Egypt*) to Heathenish and Idolatrous people, whom they lookt upon as Dogs and Swine. The Prophet instanceth in two Examples.

See the Large  
Annot. on Jer.  
47. 4.

The first is that of the *Philistims*, whom the Lord brought from their slavery in *Caphor*, Jer. 47. 4. The *Philistims* and *Caphorims* are put amongst the posterity of *Mizraim*, the Son of *Cham*, Gen. 10. 6, 14. 1 *Chron.* 1. 11, 12. they expelled the *Avims* which dwelt in *Hazerim*, which belonged to the *Philistines*, and possessed their Country, *Deut.* 2. 23.

The second instance is that of the *Syrians*, whom the Lord brought from *Kir*, where they served other Nations. These are called *Aramites*, from *Aram* the Son of *Shem*, from whom they descended, Gen. 10. 22. these were grosse Idolaters, and worshipped many Gods, *Judg.* 10. 6. and especially that noted Idol *Rimmon*, 2 *King.* 5. 18.

There was a double *Kir*, 1. There was *Kir*, a City of special note in the Land of *Moab*, Isa. 15. 1. 2. *Kir* another City situate in *Media*, of which we read, 2 *King.* 16. 9. Isa. 22. 6. *Amos* 1. 5. This was under the dominion of the *Assyrians*, and this is the *Kir* in the Text. Some make this *Kir* to be *Cyrene*, but there is no ground for that, for *Cyrene* was situate in *Lybia*, but *Kir* in *Media* under the *Assyrians*, which is far distant from *Lybia*. This deliverance of the *Syrians* from *Kir*, is mentioned only in this place; this they had from the Histories of those times which were then well known; as they had many other things not mentioned in the Scripture, as I have shewed elsewhere.

In my Com-  
men. on 2 Tim.  
3. 8. p. 152.

Some

Some give the sense thus, As the *Philistines* were ungrateful to God, who brought them out of *Caphor*, and the *Syrians*, when he brought them out of *Kir*; so *Israel* hath been ungrateful to God, who brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*. But the genuine sense and summe of all is this. *There is no reason, O ye children of Israel, why I should respect you more than the very Ethiopians (that accursed and contemptible posterity of Cham) yea why should I make any difference between you and the uncircumcised Philistines, or Idolaters Syrians, whom you have equalized, yea exceeded in sin? If you say that I brought you out of Egypt, did not I also bring the Philistines and Syrians out of Caphor and Kir? you have therefore no cause to be puffed up with these common favours.* It is true, I have out of mine own free love to you, exalted you above the Nations; but since by your sins you have abused my favours, and abased your selves, I do now no more value you than so many *Blackmores* and *Heathens*.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *To be born of pious Progenitors cannot preserve an impious people from ruine.*

It will not avail men to say with those Jews, Wee have *Abraham* to our Father, unless we do the works of *Abraham*, *John* 8. 39. *Rom.* 9. 7, 8. Let our Ancestors be never so gracious, unless we follow their gracious example, and walk in their steps, we are no better in Gods esteem, than *Ethiopians* and out-casts, yea the piety of predecessors is so far from justifying any in their sins, that it aggravates them, in that they had such good patterns set before them, and yet they would not follow them.

A Noble Pedigree is little worth, where the line of well-doing continues not; and 'tis much more glory to begin the honour of ones house, than either to end it, or not encrease it. What did it profit *Chm* that he was the Son of *Nbah*? or hurt *Abraham*, that his Father *Terah* worshipped Gods of Clay? or hurt *Timothy*, hat he was born a Gentile: Honestly (how mean soever the birth be) knows no disgrace. The Prince of *Satyrist*s (though a Heathen) yet hath spent a whole Satyr to profest *Postice longo Sanguine censeri, pictosq; ostendere vultus mæorum?* *Juvenal. Satyr. 8.*

very good purpose, against those that boast of their Noble Pedigree, when themselves have nothing that is truly Noble in them.

2. *Priviledges abused increase wrath*, Mat. 11. 20, 21, 22, 23. Rom. 2. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 2, 3, 4, 5. Heb. 2. 1, 2, 3.

When men ungratefully abuse their mercies, and the God of their mercies, 'tis just with God to strip them of those mercies. But of this at large elsewhere.

In my Com. on  
Hof. 13. 15.  
Obf. 3.

3. *Sin debaseth a people*, and makes glorious Nations like to unglorious and contemptible Heathens.

Whilst *Israel* walked up to his priviledges, he was exalted, but when he offended in *Baal*, and fell to Idolatry, he died and lost his reputation with God and Man, both at home and abroad, Hof. 13. 1. Ezek. 16. 3.

4. *The changes in Nations, and translating of Kingdomes from one to another, are not casual, but providential*. There is the finger of God in them all. 'Tis he that destroyed the *Canaanites*, and brought in *Israel*. 'Tis he that cast out *Israel*, and brought in the *Assyrians*; he rooted up *Judah*, and brought in the *Chaldean*; and rooted up the *Chaldeans* by the *Medes* and *Persians*, and brought the *Philistines* and *Syrians* out of *Captor* and *Kir*. He puts down one, and sets up another in the Throne, and none may say unto him, What dost thou? Dent. 2. 21. & 4. 21.

5. *External favours and deliverances are no Arguments of Gods internal love and favour to a people*.

See Mr. Seecher  
on Mat. 5. 47.  
P. 366, 367,  
&c. ☞

Uncircumcised *Philistines*, and Idolatrous *Syrians* may be delivered from a *Captor* and a *Kir*; and yet these preservations may be to them but reservations to greater wrath. *Pharaoh* was delivered from many plagues, yet his heart being hardened, at last hee perisht in the Sea. *All things come alike to all*, and there is no judging of Gods favour by these external things, Eccles. 9. 1, 2. The Sun of prosperity shines as well on the barren Wildernesse, as upon the fruitful Pa-

See Dyke on the  
Heart. chap. 4.  
p. 51, &c.  
see six Obser-  
vations more  
in Mr. Hutchin-

son on the place. I study brevity.

## Verse 8.

*Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful Kingdome, and I will destroy it from off the face of the Earth: saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord.*

**T**He Prophet goes on in the confirmation of what he had denounced against *Israel*, by an Argument drawn from the Justice of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity with the least approbation, and who will not acquit persons or Kingdomes that persevere in their wickednesse.

*Behold the eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful Kingdome to punish and destroy it.*

In the words wee have 1. A note of Attention, *Behold*. 2. The matter to be attended, and that is, 1. A judgement threatened, *God will destroy Israel from the Superficies, or face Mebbal pene, of the earth;* that is, he will extinguish their memorial from amongst men, and root them out of the world, so that they shall never have more the face of a Nation upon Earth. *A facie vel a Superficie terra.* The like expression we have, *Exod. 32. 12. Deut. 6. 15.* Warnings could not mend them, now Judgements shall rid the world of them.

2. Here is the reason why the Lord will thus destroy them, and that is, because they are a sinful Kingdome, or (as the words are in the fountain) they are a *sinning Kingdome*, a Kingdome even composed of sin, and drowned in iniquity. A Kingdome that sinned not through weakness, but wilfulness, whose sins were not infirmities, but enormities. They fell not by the violence of temptation, but 'twas their trade to be sinning, they were wholly given up to it, both Superiours and Inferiours had for many years been a race of Idolaters, persisting obstinately in their wicked waies; no wooing nor warning, no mercy nor menaces could work upon them, they were incorrigible and incurable, and therefore the Lord now resolves to ease himself of them.

*Quest. But who is meant by the sinful Kingdome?*

A. Some conceive that by Kingdome here is meant any  
\* sinful



sinful Kingdome indefinitely, but I conceive that *Amos* being sent more especially to prophesie against the Idolatry of the Kingdome of *Israel*, doth directly and primarily speak against the Idolatry of the Kingdome of *Israel*, for Idolatry is called *The sin*, by way of eminency (as I have shewed before on *Amos* 8. ult.) now *Israel* persevering as in other sins, so especially in this great sin of Idolatry, is here called (*Mamlachah Hachattaah, Hoc regnum peccans*) this sinful Kingdome; the article *Ha* is emphatical, and the Text saith not, Mine eyes are upon a sinful Kingdome indefinitely, but upon *This sinful Kingdome, viz. of Israel*; and then secondarily it includes the Kingdome of *Judah*, which had deeply corrupted it self, and not long after they also were carried Captives to *Babylon*.

3 Here is the certainty of the judgement, *The Eyes* of the Lord are intent upon them for this purpose (see *Verf. 4.* before) he hath set his face in anger against them to destroy them.

4 Here is a mitigation or qualification of the Threatning, *Yet he will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob*, but in the midst of judgement he will remember mercy; and having purged out the dross, and destroyed the prophane body of the people, and rebellious rout, he will preserve the penitent as a remnant for himself, according to his promise made of old to *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob*, *Lev. 26. 40, 41, 42.* Though the Lord bear Heathenish Nations to dust, and stock up the wicked root and branch; and though *Israel* deserved a total destruction, yet for his own Name sake, he will not deal so with his Church and chosen, he never utterly destroyes them, but leaves some remnant to praise him, and to shine like lights in the midst of a perverse people; and if he do bring them into Captivity, yet a remnant both of *Israel* and *Judah* shall return again, according to that precious promise, *Jer. 30. 3. 10.* *Lo the dayes come that I will bring again the Captivity of my people Israel and Judah, saith the Lord, and will cause them to return to the land that I gave to their fathers, and they shall possess it.* This was fulfilled when a remnant of *Israel* returned out of *Assyria*, and joyning themselves to *Judah*, came again into the holy Land after the seventy years Captivity.

It was usual with the Prophets to mollifie their Threatnings with the intermixture of some Promises, the better to encourage them to return, by giving them some glimpse of acceptance, and hope of mercy: for the Prophet having before uttered hard things against this people, he comes now in the close of all to end his Prophecie with promises of comfort to a remnant whom God would hide in the midst of their Captivity, till better times should come under the Gospel.

Some construe the words Ironically, and make them a confirmation of the punishment, *q.d.* I have punished Nations that never had the teaching which you have had, and do you think to go scot-free?

But this sense seems to be racked. It is better therefore to take the words as they simply import a promise of mitigation, moderation and favour to a remnant, because of the Covenant, and because of the Elect amongst them, and their Seed, who were to be the Seminary of the Church.

This is most agreeable to the contexture, and suits best with the next Verse, where the Prophet promisseth, that albeit God be resolved to sift the house of *Israel*, yet the least grain should not fall to the ground; and therefore the *Geneva* <sup>*Ephes chy. non tamen, vel remanens non*</sup> translation renders it well, *Nevertheless I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob.* Destroying, I will not destroy it, <sup>*totali consumptione consumam*</sup> that is, I will not totally destroy the family and stock of *Israel*, but will preserve a remnant for my self, though they <sup>*domum Israelis Chald. Paraph.*</sup> be captives in *Assyria* and *Chaldea*, yet as I have brought them in, so I will bring some of them out again, that they may praise me.

§ Here is the confirmation both of the Commination, and the Consolation. *Dixit Dominus*, the Lord who cannot lye, hath said it, who both can, and will perform what ever he hath spoken.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The eyes of the Lord are upon sinful Kingdomes to destroy them.*

The Kingdomes that will not submit to Christ, and serve him (be they never so many or mighty) must perish, *Isa. 60. 12.*

As his eye is upon the righteous to preserve them, so his eye is upon the wicked to destroy them (as I have shewed before on ver. 4.) As he looks upon the righteous not with a bare look of intuition, but with a look of approbation in order to their assistance to do them good, and to exert his strength for them, so he looks upon the wicked with an eye of indignation for evil, and not for good, *1 Pet. 3. 12.*

When men are given up to sin, and are become hardened and habituated in iniquity (as these were) then judgement is near, *Jer. 13. 23, 24.* especially when Kingdomes are defiled with *Idolatry*, that wickedness with a witness, that sin with an accent, which truly and properly denominates a Kingdome to be, *The sinful Kingdome.* Where ever this sin goes before, destruction is at the heels of it. It is a soul-damning, and a land-destroying sin, *Judg. 5. 8. Psal. 78. 58. to 63. Jer. 22. 7, 8, 9.* one such a sinner in grain, destroyes much good, *Eccles. 9. 17. The Idolater is a grand Traitor to the state he lives in.* He helps to bring Sword, Plague, Famine, and all curses upon a Land, *Ezek. 14. 7, 8, 21.* Gods eye is upon such to cut them off from the face of the earth.

2 Gods Ministers must wisely intermix Judgement and Mercy.

They must like the good Samaritan, have *Wine and Oyl*; *Wine* to search and cleanse mens wounds; and *Oyl* to supple and heal them. The sharpness of the Law must be allayed with the sweetness of the Gospel, *Luke 10. 34. Amos* had often threatned, now he comforts. Obstinate sinners must be terrified, and pulled with violence out of Satans jaws; others that are humbled must be handled gently, *Jude 23.* We must frame our reproofs according to the necessities of our Auditors: All sores are not cured with one salve; that may be poyson to one, which is medicinal to another. The soul must be thoroughly purged from sin, before it can be cured, or expect any health. It is in this case as it is in sores, if any corruption be left unexpelled, the wound will wrangle, and may become mortal: For sin is like *Bishops-weed*, if you leave but little spangs unweeded, they will run over your garden, and suffer nothing that is good to grow near it. Ministers then had need to have the Tongue of the Learned, to know how to speak a word in season; for if we preach al mercy,

we shall teach men to presume; if all Judgement, to despond and despair. We must therefore wisely sing both of Mercy and Judgement; hence the Prophets did usually give some glimpses of comfort, and grounds of hope to Gods people in their distresse. They had some *peradventure you may be hid and heard*, Joel 2. 14. *Jonah* 3. 9. *Zeph.* 3. 3. Take away hope, and you take away endeavours; impossibility of obtaining breaks the heart; and therefore 'tis that the Lord usually gives people some crumbs of comfort in their deepest distresse, that so they might be encouraged to come in unto him.

3. *In the midst of Judgement God usually spares a remnant*, Isa. 1. 9. & 37. 32. *Jer.* 5. 18. *Rom.* 9. 27. & 11. 5.

Though God make a full and final end of other Nations, yet he makes not a full end with his people, but corrects them in measure, and in mercy, *Jer.* 46. *ult.* Though he punish some, yet he destroys not all, but moderates publick calamities, for the Elects sake, *Mat.* 24. 22. In the Babylonish captivity the Lord preserved *Jeremy*, *Daniel*, and others. When all the Old World was drowned, yet a little remnant was spared, *viz.* *Noah*, and his family. God is ever mindful of his Covenant to his people, and in the midst of all confusions he is a Tower to his. As I have shewed elsewhere.

Is my Com. on  
Hof. 23. 14.  
Obf. 1.

## VER. 9.

*For loe I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all Nations, like as Corn is sifted in a sieve; yet shall not the least grain fall upon the Earth.*

**T**He Prophet having mentioned a mitigation of the punishment in the cloze of the precedent verse, he comes in this verse to confirm and illustrate this mitigation and moderation, by a Metaphor or Allusion taken from Husbandmen, who sift and winnow away the Chaff, but carefully preserve the Wheat.

*For loe I will command the Assyrians and Babylonians, and they shall seize on Israel and Judah, and shall sift them; and if I command, who shall hinder it? how Israel was sifted, we have seen, how Judah was sifted up and down, you may see,* Lam. 1. 3. 36 5. 5, 6.

And I will sift them as corn is sifted in a sieve; which similitude implies three things. 1. That the men of *Israel* and *Judah* should be tossed and scattered among all Nations, as Corn is tossed to and fro in a sieve.

2. As the Corn and Wheat is preserved in the sieve, when the Chaff flies away, and falls to the ground; so in the midst of all these tossings and troubles, God would preserve his people that they should not perish eternally, though they might perish temporally, as *Josiah* did, and the righteous do, *Isa.* 57. 1. *Daniel* and other good men went here into captivity, as well as others, onely they had Gods eye upon them for good, which the others wanted.

The word Corn or Wheat is not in the Original, but is necessarily understood, and therefore all translations render it, *like as Corn or Wheat is sifted in a sieve.*

3. This tossing to and fro in the sieve, separates the Wheat from the Chaff. The Chaff falls thorow and is blown away, but the Wheat and little stones which are weighty abide in the sieve, and fall not to the ground. So these trials should blow wicked men out of their habitations, and out of the world to their own places. The corrupt body of the Jewish Nation should be scattered up and down, yet a remnant should be saved, *The least grain of Gods corn shall not fall to the ground.* Some render it the least stone shall not fall to the ground, and so give an Allegorical sense, thus, Gods Elect which are like stones for solidity and stability, and are called lively stones for their zeal and activity, *1 Pet.* 2. 5. shall not perish, but abide for ever. But our Translation is most genuine and agreeable to the sifting of corn in a sieve, and though the word *Iferor* have divers significations, sometimes it is rendered a *bundle*, *Gen.* 42. 35. or a *bag*, *Prov.* 7. 20. and by a Metonymy that which is bound in the bag, or bound in Bundles as corn is used to be; so it signifies a grain or little stone, as in the Text.

q. d. Though the wicked shall perish from the Earth, yet not anything of any weight or worth, not one grain or corn which is solid and heavy like a stone, shall fall, nothing but the light, paltry chaff shall be blown away. I will so order all your dispersions by my providence, that none of mine Elect shall perish eternally; nor yet the remainder of the faithful be utterly extinguished. Though  
the

In eribratione  
duo sunt, 1.  
concussio, quâ  
omnia sursum  
deorsum vertun-  
tur. 2. Segrega-  
tio & separatio.  
Camer. Praelect.  
de Eccles. mihi  
p. 230.

Viri boni quan-  
quam communis  
mali sunt parti-  
cipes, ab exitio  
servabuntur.  
Grotius.

Lapillus pro  
grano probior  
pondus, et p'ctus  
palaeae. Cata-  
chresis.

the Corn may be beaten in the same floor with the chaff, yet it  
(hall not perish with the chaff.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. The Church of God in this life is subject to many siftings.

They must be sifted by *Assyrians*, sifted by *Babylonians*, sifted by false Brethren, sifted in Body, in Soul, in Name, Estate, every way. God hath many sieves and serfes to sift us withall, that so we may become pure manchet for our Lord and Masters use.

God hath many purgatory fires to bring his people thorow.

1. The fire of his Word, *Jer. 5. 14. & 23. 29.* 2. The fire of afflictions and persecutions, *Zach. 13. ult. 1 Pet. 4. 12.* and thus every man must be tried by fire, *1 Cor. 3. 13.* 3. If none of these fires will mend men, then comes the fire of the last Judgement, and consumes them, *Isa. 30. 33.*

All that look for salvation, must look for sifting; thorow many tribulations, we must come into Gods Kingdome, *Act. 14. 22.* The better any man is, the more trials he must look for. The more grace, the more sifting; as we see in *Abraham, Isaac, Job, David, Paul, Peter, Luke, 22. 32.* The Devil shoots his Arrows at the whitest marks. This spiritual Pyrate sets upon the laden Merchant. The Devil knows that the fall of one of these will more advantage his Kingdome, than the fall of a thousand others; and therefore he saies to his Agents, as the King of *Syria* said to his Captains, Fight neither with small nor great, but against these spiritual Kings. Men of eminent gifts and graces, especially when called to eminent places, as Magistrates, Ministers, Governours, &c. must look for eminent trials. These batter Sarans Kingdome, and break his head; and therefore let them be sure he will bruise their heels.

2. As we must look for all manner of siftings, so from all manner of parties.

From { God,  
Saran, and the  
World.

1. God will try us before he will trust us; so he dealt by

A a a 3.

Abraham,

Luc 22. 31. S

S



Abraham, Gen. 22. 1. & Job 6. 4. & 16. 9. and the Israelites, Dent. 8. 2. Christ tried the Ruler, Luk. 18. 22. and the woman of Canaan. God tempts us to try us, but Satan to destroy us. God better us by tentations, he never draws us into sin by them, as Satan doth.

*Non semper sa-  
viunt Neronēs,  
sed nunquam  
cessat Diabolus.*

2. The Devil will sift you. He that tempted thy Saviour, will not spare thee. He that was so bold with the head, will not spare the heel. This is the Devils great battery, by which he labours to destroy Gods graces in us; though the Lord so orders it, that they improve them, Job 23. 10. Sometimes he keeps us from temptations, but he is alwaies with us in them, Rev. 3. 10. Yea when Satan is most busie in tempting, then is Christ most busie in praying for us, Luk. 22. 32.

*V. Dyke on*

*Mat. 4. 1. p. 254*

Now Satan sets upon men many waies; sometimes by evil suggestions, perswasions, instigations, 1 Chron. 21. 1. 1 1<sup>st</sup> 3. 5. by blowing up the fire of corruption which lyes in our bosomes. The Devil is a great studier of men, he is a great Naturalist, he hath been trying conclusions on men almost six thousand years. He suits his Temptations according to mens tempers: if he have an *Esau* to deal with, he hath a mess of portage for him; if a covetous *Achan*, he hath a wedge of gold for him, &c. The Devil cannot force the will, he may perswade, but he cannot compel. There is a threefold liberty of the will, 1 From sin; 2 From misery; 3 From Necessity. The two first we have lost, but from necessity and co-action the will is free; so free, that if it could be constrained, it were no will: and therefore in conversion the Lord doth not force the will, but sweetly inclines it. We should therefore blame our selves for our folly, James 1. 14. So did David, Psal. 51. 4. and when by Satans instigation he had numbred the people, yet he layes not the fault upon Satan, but upon himself, *I have done exceeding foolishly*. Pray with that good man, *Lord deliver me from that evil man my self*.

3 The World abounds with Temptations, we go upon snafes, in our beds, at our boards, at all times, in all places, among all persons temptations are laid for us, in publick and private, above us, beneath us, round about wee are beset: Prosperity and pleasures on the one hand destroy thousands, and persecution and losses on the other hand. Had we not need then to be sober and watch? 1 Pet. 5. 8. and to watch and

and pray, *Math. 26. 41.* Shunning all occasions of sin : Not parling with temptations, diligent in our places, not trusting to our own strength. Sit down and cast what it will cost us if we be Christs Disciples. These things should not discourage, but quicken us to duty. We say of some weeds they are ill things, but they are signes of rich ground. So these siftings and tentations are irksome, but whole-<sup>cibration: Dei</sup>some; the Torch burns the brighter for beating. The <sup>non perditur,</sup>Vine is the better for bleeding; The Orchard for pruning: <sup>sed u gatur</sup>The Garden for weeding, and the Soul for sifting. It is a <sup>frumen um Dei,</sup>good sign of some great good doing, when we have many ad-<sup>Zanchy.</sup>versaries, and much opposition, *1 Cor. 16. 9.* Standing pools gather mud. There are many dregs in those *Moabs* that are at ease, and are not emptied from vessel to vessel, *Jer. 48. 11.* I never knew any man kept long from corruption and putrefaction that was not (especially at his first setting out) salted and seasoned with many temptations and afflictions. Be not therefore offended at them; such Humiliations are the way to Exaltation, and such trials (if we sincerely, patiently and perseveringly improve them) our great glory. *Job* was more famous for his sufferings, than *Alexander* or *Cæsar* were for their Victories. His tentations brought more honour to him than all his riches. If *Job* had been onely the richest man in the East, in all probability we had never heard of him, but that which honoured him so much as to have a whole book written in his praise, was his **Tentations** and Victories, his **Conflicts** and his **Conquests**.

These are *via ad Regnum*, the very path way to piety and glory, *2 Cor. 4. 17.* *1 Pet. 1. 7.* Did the stone but know when it is hewn and squared that it is to fit it for a Kings house and service; or did the timber but know when its knots are hewn off, and it seasoned with wind and weather, that it might become a Throne for some high and mighty Prince, would it not rejoyce and glory? And shall not we rejoyce in those Tentations and Afflictions which fit us for the service of the King of Kings?

*Nisi tentatio,  
nec corona; nisi  
certamina, nec  
premia, nisi hy-  
emes, nec aestas,  
chrysos.*

*Quod ignis est  
auro, lima ferro,  
scalp um lapidi,  
runcina ligno,*

*laxivium panno, ventilabrum tritico, sat carni, fornax pani, malleus saxo, hoc iusto tentatio.*

[See more about Tentation in that excellent Treatise of  
Mr.

Mr. Bridge upon Temptations, and upon *Luke 22. 32.* Dr. Holdsworth on *James 1. 12.* Mr. Bolton Comfort of afflicted Conscience, p. 564-591. B. Halls Balm of Gilead, p. 101. D. Taylor on Contentment. Dyke on *Matth. 4. 1. &c.* Sibelius Tom. 1. p. 1. and p. 139. Weems 1 Vol. 1 Part. p. 297. &c. Mr. Capel on *Tentat. per totum.* Mr. Meads Ser. on *Eph. 5. 15.* Ward on *Matth. 4. 1. &c.*]

2 The captivity and banishment of a people comes from God.

See Mr. Green-  
hi on Ezek.  
11. 17. p. 389.

As all other evils of punishment, so this amongst the rest comes from him. It is he that commands *Assyrians* and *Babylonians* to lead us into Captivity. *Israel* and *Judah*, had been long in Captivity to sin and Satan, and therefore the Lord sent them seven times into Captivity. This may befall Gods dear *Elijahs* and *Daniels*, and such of whom the world is not worthy, these may be driven from all, and be forced to wander in Desarts and Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the earth, *Heb. 11. 37, 38.* This must make us dumb and silent, since it is the Lord (who is a God of judgement, and knows what is better for us than we do for our selves, *Isa. 30. 18.*) that doth it. Wicked men cannot lead us into Captivity till God give the word of Command, *I will command the house of Israel to be sified amongst all Nations.* This was in part fulfilled then; but since their crucifying of Christ, and rejecting the Lord of glory, all the twelve Tribes have been tossed and scattered over all the world, being hated and contemned of all Nations.

3 The godly are Gods grain.

Math.  
3. 12  
13. 30.

They are called his Wheat, *Matth. 3. 12, 13. 30.* The wicked are Chaff, Cockle, Wilde-oars, Dross, *Psal. 119. 119.* Dregs, Scum, Filth, vain, light persons, that have no weight, nor worth, no favouriness, nor solidity in them, and therefore they are called Chaff, *Psal. 1. 4.* which is blown away with every wind as good for nothing. But the godly are Gods Wheat, which is a substantial, precious grain, bringing great gain to the owner, strengthening and delighting the hearts of those that feed on it. Though it hang down the head, and make no great shew outwardly, yet within it is full of fine meal and flower, *Psal. 81. ult.* So the godly, though they make no great shew outwardly, yet they are all glorious

ous within, their beauty is an internal beauty, which cannot be seen with bodily eyes, *Pfal. 45. 13.* and though they be condemned by the prophane world, yet are their persons, Prayers, and performances very precious in Gods eyes.

2 *Wheat* is solid, weighry, stable, and abides in the floor, it is not tossed up and down with every wind as the Chaff is; so the godly are rooted, grounded, and stablished in the faith, *Col. 2. 7.* they are not tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine, as those *Palcares homines* of our times are, but they are an everlasting foundation, like stones that abide in the building, and cannot be removed by any storms.

3 *Wheat* must be threshed, winnowed, and ground to meal, that it may be fit for food. The godly are Gods Wheat in this sense also, they must be threshed, sifted, and fanned with many tentations and afflictions, yea they must be ground even to dust by the teeth of the wild beasts of the world, that they may become pure Manchet (as the Martyr said) for their Masters service.

4 *Wheat* when it is ripe is cut down, and laid up safe in the barn and garner. The chaff and refuse wee cast out of doors, but our choyce grain we house; so when Gods people are fit for Heaven, God sends his Angels to gather his Wheat into his garner, into heaven and happiness, *Mat. 13. 30.*

4 *Not one grain of Gods pure, precious corn shall perish.*

Chaff and Darnel; Tares and Hypocrites shall fall and perish, but not one corn of right grain shall perish eternally; though they may goe into captivity, and be afflicted outwardly as well as others, as *Jeremy, Ezekiel, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Mordecai, Hester, Zern's babel, &c.* and others went all into captivity: but the Lord was with them there, so that they kept their garments pure, and did shine like lights in the midst of an Idolatrous and perverse generation. They dye in peace, though (*Josiah-like*) they fall in barrel, the Lord is a sanctuary to them in their captivity, *Ezek. 11. 16, 17.* and makes them to be pitied of those that lead them captive, *Psa. 106. 46.* and gives them favour as he did *Joseph* in the Prison, *Gen. 39. 21.* and *Jeremy* in *Babylon*, *Jer. 39. 11, 12.* so that sifted and tempted they may and must be, but totally and finally destroyed they can never be; for they have Gods Almighty power to keep them, *Joh. 10. 28.* they have Christ to

See my Com.  
on 2 Tim. 3. 3.  
p. 113.

*Dei frumentum  
sum, & bestia-  
rum dentibus  
molor, ut panis  
purus sincerusq;  
reperia. Igna-  
tius.*

In my *Thesis de*  
*perseverantia*  
*Sanctorum.*

pray for them, his Spirit to seal them, the seed of God abiding in them, so that nothing can separate them from Christ, as I have proved at large elsewhere.

VERSE 10.

*All the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword; which say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.*

**T**HE Prophet having comforted Gods people against final perishing, returns again to his Comminations against the obstinate, lest they should presume and appropriate those Promises to themselves which belonged not to them; where we have,

1 A Judgement threatned, viz. *The Sword. They shall dye by the sword*; that is, some of them shall be actually slain, the rest shall goe into captivity and banishment, which is a civil death, or which is worse, they shall dye *Gladio Spirituali*; (saith *Mercer*) by the sword of the Spirit, being blinded and rejected of God, so that they cannot repent. But this (though it be a truth) yet not from this text.

2 Here are the *Persons* upon whom this Judgement shall fall, and those are *Sinners*, all the sinners that are impenitent; Idolatrous, presumptuous sinners, especially *Idolaters*; those sinners with a witness, and such was the body and bulk of this people; *All* those be they high or low, superiours or inferiours, first or last they shall fall by the sword; since they will not beleieve Gods Word, they shall feel his Rod.

Obj. *But we are the Lords People by external profession, by Covenant, and by visible Adoption.*

A. Be it so, yet all the sinners of my people by profession, since they condemn the counsel of my Prophets, and persist in their loose conversation, shall perish in their sin.

3 Here is a further Character of them, or another brand set upon them, whereby they may be known, and that is, their *security*; and *incredulity*; in sleighting and contemning both God and his threatnings.

*They say, the evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.*

See how diametrically opposite they are to God. The Lord sayes, the evil of punishment shall come upon them. They say, the

the contrary; This evil and calamity shall not come upon us, at least *it shall not overtake us* (or anticipate) and prevent us; *Non anticipa- bunt nos mala.* that is, either it shall not come, or it shall not come in our dayes, but when we are dead and gone; or if it doe come yet it shall not come upon us, it shall not come neer us to surprize us. They thought themselves priviledged from such perils, and that they should never seize on them.

But what saith the Lord to all this? why he cannot bear with such high and horrid contempt of him and his Word, and therefore he tells them plainly, that all those incorrigible and incurable Sinners should fall by the sword, since they say, *This evil shall not overtake us*, therefore it shall overtake them, and destroy them.

OBSERVATIONS.

1 Carnal security ends in misery.

When once men begin to put the evil day farre from them, and sing a *Requiem* to their Souls, then comes sudden and swift destruction, *Isa.* 18. 15, 17, 18. *Ier.* 2. 35. & 5. 11, 12, 13. there we have their security; and *Verf.* 14, 15, 16, 17. the punishment follows. So *Mat.* 24. 48, 49. see their security; and *verf.* 50, 51. the punishment follows. When people are secure and incredulous, and will not hear, they shall be made to feel the truth of the Threatnings; as *Lots* Sons-in-law that would not beleieve, were burnt to ashes, *Gen.* 19. 14. yet the world abounds with such; tell the Idolater, the Oppressor, the Fornicator, &c. of Judgements ready to seize upon them, and they are ready to mock, and say, Let the day of the Lord come that we may see it, *Isa.* 5. 19. *Ier.* 17. 15. so they shall to their sorrow, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. *Amos* 5. 18.

2 No priviledge can preserve an impenitent, Idolatrous people from ruine.

No, though they be *my people*, yet if my people will not walk in my wayes, but will rebel against me, even the sinners of my people shall dye by the sword. But of this oft before.



## VERSE II.

*In that day I will raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruines, and I will build it as in the dayes of old.*

**V**EE are now come to the Third and last general part of this Chapter, and that is *consolatory*, containing many precious Promises concerning the Kingdom of Christ, and the restauration and enlargement of the Church in the dayes of the Messiah.

The Prophet before had been *Minatory*, terrifying them with many dreadful comminations of desolation and utter ruine, for their Apostasie and rebellion; but now (that his Sun might not set in a Cloud) hee concludes all with most sweet Evangelical consolations, for the refreshing of the remnant of the Elect under those sad Calamities which for many years they lay under. To this end he assures them, that though all at present were in confusion, and the house of *David* lay in the dust; yet the Lord who usually brings light out of darkness, and comfort out of discomfort, would in the conclusion restore the Kingdom unto *Israel*, and make up all their losses in a better kind with spiritual blessings.

And this was the frequent practice of the Prophets, to intermixe comforts with their Threatnings; the very first Judgement that was pronounced against fallen man, was allayed with a Promise presently annexed.

1. They used to awaken and humble their Hearers with terrors and threatnings, and then to raise them up again with consolations, especially with the promises of the Messiah, who was the salvation and consolation of *Israel*, yea the joy and desire of all Nations, *Hag.* 2. 8. in whom all the Promises were ratified and confirmed. *2 Cor.* 1. 20.

Both *Israel* and *Judah* were falling into a very forlorn, scattered, sad condition; the Prophet therefore to keep the godly amongst them from sinking into utter despair, comforts them with this, that in the midst of judgement God would remember mercy, being ever mindful of his Covenant, and though

though he punish them for their transgressions, yet in due time he would send the Messiah with healing under his wings amongst them.

Some goe about to confine this glorious Prophecie to *Hezekiah's* time, when *Senacherib* and his Host was slain.

Others refer it to the times when *Judah* returned out of their *Babylonish* Captivity, in the reign of *Cyrus* King of *Persia*, when they repaired the ruines of *Jerusalem*; But the text is clear against this, for those were but poor, sleight, slender restorations comparatively with this: For 1. but a remnant came out of the *Babylonish* Captivity, and those poor and low, and farre fewer of *Israel* returned out of *Assyria*. But the restoration here spoken of is most ample and glorious, as appears by those high and Hyperbolical expressions of possessing all Nations, and the Mountains dropping wine, and the Hills running with Milk and Honey, and all *Israel* returning out of Captivity.

It is therefore confessed by all (even by some of the *Jews* themselves) that these Promises have relation to Christ, and should be fulfilled in Gospel-times, according to that Apostolical allegation, and interpretation of this very Text by Saint *James* in the Synod at *Jerusalem*, *Acts* 15. 16, 17. After this *I will return, and build again the Tabernacle of David which is fallen down*; that is, the Church of God, in which Christ the Son of *David* should dwell and reign; it should be repaired and restored by the Messiah, and *I will build again the ruines thereof*, viz. by planting in it the beleieving *Jews*, and bringing in the *Gentiles* as living stones, in the stead of the unbelieving *Jews*. That the residue of men may seek the Lord; that is, not only the *Jews*, but all other Nations. The Apostle *James* following the Septuagint speaketh the same sense, though not the very same words. The Prophet saith the *Gentiles* shall be called, and he instanceth in the residue of *Edom*; but *James* here speaks more generally, and saith, all the *Gentiles* (which includes *Edom*.) shall seek after the Lord.

See Schooll-Guard, Rule 20. and Glassius Philolog. Tract. 2. cap. 7. p. 14. 72.

In these five last Verses of this Chapter, we have a notable Prophecie of glorious things to come, and a cluster of precious Promises, no lesse than five.

For the reconciling the Prophet and the Apostle, see Mr. H. 1st. 2. on Amos 9. 11.

1. Here is a Promise of the restoration of *David's* Kingdom.

- 2 Of the calling of the *Gentiles*.
- 3 Of the abundance of *Spiritual* gifts which should be in Christ's Kingdom, typified by the abundance of Corn and Wine.
- 4 Of the gathering of the Captives from banishment, into the Kingdom of Christ.
- 5 Of protection from their enemies, and perpetual habitation in their own Land.

## VERSE II.

*In that day will I raise up the Tabernacle of David that is fallen, &c. Act. 15. 16.*

**T**His general Promise is pregnant, and contains many particular branches within it.

*Hoc omne Metaphoricè de regno Christi & Ecclesiæ à gentibus collectæ, intelligendum esse, testatur Jacobus, Act. 15. 16. Glossus in Philolog.*

- 1 The Lord promiseth, that he will build up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen.
- 2 He will close up the breaches thereof.
- 3 He will raise up his ruines.
- 4 He will build it as in the dayes of old.
- 5 Here is the *Time* when all these glorious things shall be accomplished, and that is, *In illo die, In that day*, viz. in that glorious day of the Gospel; when Christ the Son of righteousness should come into the world. In that day of Salvation, in that day of Light and Grace, when the substance should come, and the shadow be gone; in those glorious Gospel-times should this glorious restoration and reparation of the house of David come by Christ. Or, in that day (say some) of *Israels* deep distresse and sad Captivity, will I raise, and raise them out of the dust.

That Christ should come in the flesh, the Prophets had assured them, but of the *punctual* day, and year when he should come, they were uncertain; and therefore the Prophets made diligent search as far as they might with sobriety into this Mystery, 1 Pet. 1. 11. this made them speak so modestly and generally, *In that day*, or in that time (for it is an usual Hebrewism to put a day indefinitely for time, as *Hos. 2. 21. Joel 3. 1.*) which was fore-told by the Prophets, *Gen. 49. 10. Isa. 11. 1. Dan. 9. 24.* and appointed by God when the fullness

ness of time should come, Gal. 4. 4. then would the Lord raise up the Tabernacle of David which was fallen, g. 4. In the dayes of the Messiah I will restore the Kingdom of David, and make that which was before a temporal and mutable Kingdome, to become a Spiritual and eternal Kingdome; and let this Rule be remembred once for all, *That these promises of Promissio libe- temporal blessings must be understood Spiritually*; they must not ratiōis spiri- be taken literally for the setting up of any earthly, external, tualis constat pompous Kingdome in the Posterity of David, such a one as Allegoria perpetua, quā libera- the Jewes look for, Acts 1. 6. and the Millenarians fancy to tio illa significa- themselves, who take this Text in the Letter for building of tw per beneficia corporalia. Pif. fine Houses, and plenty of Corn and Wine, and delighting calor. themselves with the Quintessence of the Creature; whereas it is usual with the Prophets in the Old Testament, to shadow forth Spiritual blessings by Temporal things; and this the Lord did the better to work upon the Jewes, who were a carnal, rude, rugged people, and not so easily wrought upon by Spiritual blessings, as by Temporal and visible ones; so that as the Legal threatnings were usually of Temporal Judgements (though they comprehended Spiritual ones also) *Dan.* 28. 16, 17, 18, &c. so the Promises under the Law were usually of Temporal blessings, though they included Spiritual ones also. But the Gospel proclaims Spiritual mercies, which are more noble and divine: for though peace and plenty are the Concomitants of the Gospel, yet these are poor uncertaine things, compared with Covenant-Mercies, which are called *Sure Mercies*, Isa. 55. 3. Besides, Christs Kingdome is not of this world, his Kingdome is not meat and drink, *Rom.* 14. 17. but it is a Spiritual kingdome, and so must be taken here. This Kingdome Christ will restore when he shall gather his Church out of Jewes and Gentiles, in which Church there shall bee greater glory, than ever David or Solomon had, though in respect of outward splendor it be lesse, yet in respect of inward glory, it shall excel, *Hag.* 2. 9.

Let us take the Text in the Letter, and see what absurdities will follow.

1 If you take this *building of the Tabernacle of David*, for a restoring of the Kingdome of Israel to its former pomp and power, and for the subduing of Edom, and other Nations by the Sword, and that they should never be rooted out of their

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owne Land, &c. See how all these things are contradicted. For,  
 1 When they returned out of *Babylonish* Captivity they had indeed a Kingdome, but it was a poor, torn, contemptible one.

2 They were so farre from reigning over *Edom*, and the other Nations, that they were Tributary a long time to the *Medes* and *Persians*, to the *Egyptians* and *Sirians*, and at last were brought under the *Roman* yoke, *Herod* the *Asclonite* tyrannizing over them, even when Christ was born, and at last for rejecting Christ, and Crucifying the Lord of Glory, their City and Temple was destroyed, and themselves despered like Vagabonds over the whole World, and so have continued this sixteen hundred years; so that literally this Text was never yet fulfilled, nor ever will be, whatever waine men may fancy.

Inquitur de in-  
 stauracione Spi-  
 rituali, quâ e-  
 lecti Israelitæ  
 per prædicatio-  
 nem Evangelii  
 colligendi fue-  
 rint in ovile  
 Christi. Piscat.

But let us take the words in a Spiritual sense, in reference to Christ, who hath indeed repaired the ruines of the House of *David*, by sending his Apostles to preach the Gospel thro-  
 5 row the world, and to gather *Jewes* and *Gentiles* into the unity of his Church, and so erecting to himself an everlasting King-  
 dome, according to that of the Angel *Gabriel*, *Luke* 1. 32, 33. *He shall be great, and he shall be called the Son of the most high, and he shall sit upon the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever.* These words are an excellent Comment upon the text, *The Lord shall give him the throne of his father David*; that is, Christ shall have a Spiritual Kingdome over his Church, whereof *Dauids* worldly Kingdome was a Type; and he shall be a Spiritual King over the spiritual house of *Jacob* for ever. Thus you see it is a Spi-  
 ritual raising-up of the decayed Tabernacle of *Jacob*, and not any Temporal one that is here spoken of; and this Spiritual sense *St. James* confirms in the fore-mentioned place, *Acts* 15. 7, 13. to 17. where he proves the conversion of the *Gentiles* by the preaching of the Gospel from this very text in *Amos*; and this will better appear when we come to ver. 12. Now whether shall we beleeve *Saint James*, who saith that this text in *Amos* relates to Christ, and to the conversion and vocati-  
 on of the *Gentiles*, unto the faith of Christ; or else the *Jewes* and *Millenarians*, who dream (as *Dr. Homes* doth) of a Saviour that shall reign in a Corporal, visible man-  
 ner

See him confu-  
 red in the end  
 of the Book.

ner here on earth, in external glory and felicity with the Saints a thousand years,

*I will raise up the Tabernacle of David which is fallen.*

By the Tabernacle of *David* is meant the House or Kingdom of *David*, which was a Type of the Church, which is Christ's spiritual kingdom. It is here called a Tent, or Tabernacle, because of that mean and low condition which *David's* family was now in; it was not now a Palace, but a poor flitting Tent, or Tabernacle, and that a fallen one too, full of ruptures and ruins; which intimates the sad desolation which had been made in *David's* family. His Kingdom which was sometimes potent and flourishing, now was become like a poor ruinous Cottage, for all was out of order both in Church and State when Christ came.

*Tabernaculum David regnum Messia & ecclesia denotat, quo usut humile est pii protegentur. Glasius. Succa, tegumentum, Tabernaculum, tentorium, à Sacach, Velavit, operuit, texit.*

1 The ten Tribes fell off from the house of *David* to *Jeroboam*, and from the true Worship of God to worship Calves.

2 The *Syrians* and the *Philistines* made inroads upon them.

3 The *Assyrians* made havock of *Israel*, and carried the ten Tribes into Captivity; and the *Babylonians* fell upon *Judah*, and carried them Captive into *Babylon*, and the *Romans* fell upon them again after they came out of *Babylon*, and scattered them over the whole world; *Israel* never returned againe out of the *Assyrian* Captivity, only some few gleanings joynd themselves to *Judah* when they returned out of *Babylon* and came to *Jerusalem*; and though *Judah* did return after the seventy years were expired, yet Tyrants did so tear and shatter them (as appears by the Books of the *Maccabees*) that there was no splendor, no glory, nor scarce the face of a Kingdom amongst them, *Amos* 5. 2. at last came *Herod* the Tyrant, who rooted up *David's* stock, and settled the Crown upon his owne head. Besides, when Christ came, he found the Church pestered with false Prophets, swarming with Scribes and Pharisees, and such as taught for Doctrines the Precepts of men. Thus what with the cruelty of Tyrants on the one hand, and the corruptions of false teachers on the other hand; the Tabernacle of *David* was sadly fallen.

And thus the house of *David* lay in its ruins (being shrunk

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from



from *David* the King, to *Joseph* the Carpenter ) till Christ the Son of *David* came, who repaired the breaches, and fulfilled the Prophecies. Then *in that day*, and *at that time* when all seemed to be gone, and all Human help failed, the Lord who loves to be seen in the Mount, sent the Messiah to raise up this Tabernacle of *David* which was fallen, and make it more illustrious than ever : yet not in Temporals, but which is more glorious and divine, in Spirituals ; enlarging the Churches dominion over all Nations, *Math.* 28. 19. and changing that earthly Kingdom of *David*, into a Spiritual and everlasting Kingdom, according to that promise; *2 Sam.* 7. 16.

*Q. But why is this restauration of all by Christ called, the raising up of the Tabernacle of David ?*

*A.* For two reasons ; 1. Because the Kingdom of *David* was Typical, as *David* himself was a Type of Christ, so his Temporal Kingdom typified and prefigured Christs Spiritual Kingdom. 2. Christ was the Son of *David* according to the flesh, now the Kingdom was promised to *David* and his Seed for ever, *Psal.* 72. 17. hence Christ is so oft called, *David*, *Jer.* 30. 9. *Ezek.* 34. 23. & 37. 14. *Hos.* 3. 5.

*And I will close up the Breaches thereof.*

*Gadary, septit,*  
*so Job 19. 8.*  
*Lam. 3. 7.*

I will make up the gaps of the Tabernacle of *David*, or hedge and wall-up the breaches of it, by causing the Gospel to be preached over all the World, which will quickly close up all the ruptures, and make up all the ruines which Sin and Satan hath made ; and chase away all those Traditions of men which false Prophets had brought into the Church of God. This began to bee accomplished when Christ began to preach, and his Apostles after him, as when *Paul* and *Barnabas* preaching to the *Gentiles* converted them, *Acts* 15. 7, &c. and it is daily accomplishing by the enlargement of the Church, but a more full accomplishment hereof will be when the *Jewes* and *Gentiles* shall be called, and united together under Christ their Head.

*And I will raise up his ruines.*

All its Batteries and Breakings, all its Rubbish and Ruines shall be repaired by Christ still. Wee see ( as hath been shewed before ) how low the house of *David* was sunk ;  
ic

it was like a poor Tent or Cottage, ruinous and full of breaches, and to a carnal eye irrecoverable and past hope.

*And I will build it as in the dayes of old.*

When it was in its most flourishing and prosperous condition, in those purer times of *David*, and the beginning of *Solomons* reign, when they were free from Superstition and Idolatry, serving the Lord in simplicity and singleness of heart.

The summe of all is this; *In that day of Jacobs deep distress, I will raise up my Evangelical Church, which is the Tabernacle of the true and glorious Son of David, the Messiah of the World, even upon the ruins of the Jewish Church, which I will repair, and so make up the Spiritual breaches thereof, as that both Jewes and Gentiles shall make up one Church, which shall be made as Spiritually compleat as ever the Temple was materially of old.*

#### OBSERVATIONS.

1 *Modesty and Sobriety becomes us, especially when we treat of divine Mysteries.*

We must not be wise above that which is written, nor curiously pry into the secrets of the Almighty; and therefore great is the folly of many in our times, that take upon them to tell the day, the year, and almost the hour (so divinely inspired are they, at least in their owne conceits) when *Babylon* shall fall, and the *Jewes* be called. One sayes, Antichrist shall fall One thousand six hundred thirty nine, another One thousand six hundred forty three, another One thousand six hundred and fifty, another One thousand six hundred fifty five, so *Clavis Apocalyptica*, many One thousand six hundred sixty six; only Sir *Henry Vane* wiser than all the rest (at least opinionatively) tells us flatly, that the walls of this *Jericho* shall fall flat before *Jesus* the true *Joshua*, four hundred and forty years hence, viz. *In the year Two thousand, thou comes the seventh part of time which shall be the true Sabbath.* Wisely done Sir *Henry*, to set so long a time that you may be dead and rotten before it come, when others that have set shorter times have lived to be laught at to their faces; the folly of these men hath been made known to all. It

were well if men would learn of the Prophet here to keep to generals. *In that day, and at that time*, and not point at particulars to their owne shame. Secret things belong to the Lord, there is enough revealed to exercise our parts and studies, though we should live *Methusalems* dayes.

2 *That the Church of God in this life may be brought to a very low condition.*

It may seem like a poor little Tent, or rattered Cottage, full of breaches and ruines, *Isa. 1. 8.* so that it is scarcely visible, and yet be a true Church, *1 King. 19. 20.* as the Moon is the Moon and in Heaven still, though it lye hid for a time under the Clouds from our sight.

*De visibilit. Ecclesie. consule Cameronem, in Mar. 18. 19. p. 244.*

3 *After deep humiliation comes great consolation.*

Never any so deeply humbled as Christ, and never any more highly exalted, *Phil. 2. 6. to 12.* after this people had for many years been sifted, and tossed, and captivated, and the family of *David* brought to the dust, and no Human help appearing, but they lay like dry bones scattered up and down, yet now doth the Lord appear, and raise up the Tabernacle of *David*, that was fallen, by sending the Messiah that little Branch, or Sprig, out of the stock or contemptible stump of *Jesse*, that was hewn down and cut off, *Isa. 11. 1.* when mans help fails, then God appears; our extremity is his opportunity, *Cum duplicantur lateres, venit Moses.* In the Mount will the Lord be seen. Christ came not here till all seemed to be lost and laid on heaps, he still reserves his holy hand for a dead lift, and delights to help those that are forsaken of their hopes, *Dent. 32. 36. Psal. 10. 14. & 22. 11.* when this goodly Family was sunk so low as from *David* the King, to *Joseph* the Carpenter, so that there was neither King nor Prince left, then Christ appears and raiseth it up; when the Scepter was departed from *Judah*, then *Shilo* comes, *Gen. 49. 10.* when all was here in confusion both in Church and State, then comes the Messiah, that Horn of Salvation, and the glory of his people *Israel.*

See more in my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 9. p. 182. & p. 456.

4 *The Churches comforts are hid in Christ.*

It is he that makes up our breaches, raiseth us out of our ruines, and restores comfort to *Sion*, and to her Mourners. All our comforts, and all our fresh Springs are in him; our Election, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification, Salvation, come

come all from this Founrain, *Ephes. 1. 3. to 15.* He is Bread to strengthen us, Wine to comfort us, Water to wash us ; a King to defend us, a Prophet to reach us, a Priest to intercede for us. In a word, he is All in All unto us, as I have shewed elsewhere. In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15.

5 The Old Testament is the Word of God, and abides in New Testament times. P. 270.

James the Apostle when he would prove the calling of the Gentiles he goes to the Old Testament, the written Word of God, and from thence proves it ; now had it not been Authentical, the Apostles allegation had been invalid. But of this at large elsewhere. In my Com. on 2 Tim. 3. 15. p. 261, &c.

6 Gospel priviledges are glorious priviledges.

The Church was glorious of old in *David's* time, when men went by troops to the House of God, and fled as the Clouds, and flockt as the Doves unto their windows. But the Spiritual glory of the Church in the dayes of the Gospel is farre more glorious than in the dayes of *Israel* of old. They had but the shadow, we have the substance ; they saw Christ but darkly in Types and Figures, but we see him with open face. Hence the glory of the latter Temple is said to be greater than the glory of the former, *Hag. 2. 9.* But how can that be, since the glory of the first Temple was farre more excellent for building than the latter ? insomuch that the ancient now wept to see how farre short it came of the former. I, but the glory of this latter House ( though inferiour for structure ) yet shall be greater than the glory of the former, because Christ the Messiah should personally appear there ; and from thence should the Gospel of peace goe forth into all the world, which should work a true and blessed tranquillity in the hearts of all beleevers. Hence *John* the Baptist is preferred before the Old Testament Prophets, both in dignity and doctrine ; and New Testament Ministers ( who publish the whole Gospel ) are preferred before him, *Mat. 11. 11.* Let us then bleis the Lord for Gospel-priviledges, keeping them in purity and simplicity, for though in Old Testament-times God allowed them Musick in publick Services, with Altars, Holy Vestments, &c. yet Christ their substance being come, these shadowes are gone ; and now Christ will demand, *Who required these things at*

See an excellent Ser. of Mr. Pools, on John 4. 24. *your hands?* In vain is all such Will-worship, the Worship that Christ calls for now, is a worship in spirit and in truth.

## VER. 12.

*That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Heathen, which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.*

THE Prophet goes on to comfort the remnant of the faithful in *Israel* and *Judah* in their low condition, with the promises of better times under the Messiah; then should *David's* Spiritual Kingdom be more glorious than

*Israelitæ possidebunt gentes, non externâ possessione (ut Judæi somniant) sed spiritualiter eas adducentes ad Dei cognitionem & verum cultum in Christo per Christum in unam cum Judæis Ecclesiam, ut ex utroq; populo una fiat Christi ecclesia. Mercer.*

ever, and the bounds of it more ample than in the dayes of old; for when the Messiah shall come, the *Gentiles* shall be called, and the very *Edomites* (which were deadly enemies to Gods wayes and people, *Amos* 1. 9, 11. *Obad.* 10, 11, 12.) shall submit their necks to Christs yoke, and be brought into the com-

munion of Christs Church, by the operation of the Spirit in the preaching of the Gospel; yea and all the elect Heathen shall come in with them, according to that Promise, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 19. ult.

Formerly the Church was shut up within narrow bounds, and confined to the *Jewes* only, but now it shall spread it self over all Nations. The Prophet begins and names *Edom* first, because they were near Neighbours, and though Brethren to the *Jewes*, yet were they bitter enemies to them, rejoicing in their calamity, and laughing at their downfall, *Lam.* 4. 21. *Obad.* 22. Yet now these should be converted, and of foes become friends, and at unity with Gods people. These Lions should be turned into Lambs, and these Wolves into Sheep, and some remnants out of all Nations (though never so rude and barbarous) should bee brought unto Christs Sheep-fold.

God had plagued *Edom* very fore, *Numb.* 24. 18. *Isa.* 63. 1. especially by the hands of *Nebuchadnezzar*, yet now he promisetht that a remnant of them shall be joyned with the *Jewes* in

What these *Edomites* were, see at large in the large Annotation, on *Amos* 1. 11.

in one Church whereof Christ is the Head, *Obad.* 18, 19. and therefore the Apostle *James* tells the *Jewes*, that they ought not to wonder that the *Gentiles* had received the Holy Ghost as well as they, since it was fore-told by the Prophets, and amongst the rest by our Prophet here, *Acts* 15. 15, 16, 17.

2 Here is a further description of these Gospel-Converts, they are such as upon whom my name is called; that is, they are such as are called by my name, who are indeed my people. The like expression we have, *Gen.* 48. 16. *The Lord blesse the Lads, and let my name be called on them*; that is, let them be accounted my Progeny (saith *Jacob*) and be called my children. The like parallel expression we have, *Isa.* 4. 1. & 63. ult. *Let us be called by thy name*; that is, let us be thine. So the People of *Israel* are called, *The People which are called by Gods name*, *Deut.* 28. 10. *2 Chron.* 7. 14. that is, the Church and People of God who professed his name, acknowledging that he was their God, and they his People. So those *Gentile-Nations* which were sometimes strangers from the Covenant, and aliens from the Common-wealth of *Israel*, and were not Gods People, shall now be called the People of the living God, they shall shew themselves unto Christ, and have his name put upon them, and shall be called Christians, *Acts*

*Invocari nomen  
alicujus super  
alium, nihil al-  
tius est quam  
aliquem esse al-  
terius imperio  
obsequentem &  
subditum, sicut  
super uxorem  
dicitur invocari  
mariti nomen.  
Sanctius...*

11. 26.

Obj. *It is impossible that ever such desperate Edomites, and old enemies should ever be converted and brought in to Christ.*

A. With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible; *It is the Lord that doth it* (saith the text) and therefore doe not doubt of the performance, for he is both faithful and able who hath promised. Neither be offended that the *Gentiles* are called whom yee count unclean, for it is God that doth this, who doth all things well.

Q. *But when was this Promise ever fulfilled, say the Millenarian Jewes?*

A. It began to be fulfilled when the *Gentiles* were brought in with the remnant of the *Jewes*, who came in the roome of the unbelieving *Jewes* in the Apostles times, so that the Promise is fulfilled *inchoatim* already.

2 It is daily fulfilling, and shall be more and more fulfilled even to the end of the world, especially when the *Jewes* shall be called, and the subjects of the *Gentiles* shall come in,  
and



and they shall all become one Church, and make up one Body, and one Sheep-fold under Christ their head.

The summe is this, *In Gospel-times both Jewes and Gentiles shall be so united, that they shall make up one Church, and the bounds thereof shall be extended over all the earth, even to the remotest Heathen, which shall then be called by my name, saith the Lord that doth this.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 *The Election of God is free.*

He doth not chuse men for any fore-seen works or merits, or improvement of Free-will, but all is Mercy and Free-grace. What did the Lord see in those prophane, Idolatrous *Edomites*, to move him to call a remnant of them? nay, what did he not see in them why he should not reject them? and yet of his owne free-mercy, these cruel *Edomites*, and prophane *Gentiles* which were not his People, are here called his People. Away then with all those conceits of Merit, Free-will, Universal Election (which is a gross contradiction) for if all be chosen, then it is not an *Election*, but a *Collection* of all; for Election implies a chusing of some, and a passing by of others.

See my Com.  
on 1 Tim. 4. 8.  
p. 408, 409.

Let us then who are *Gentiles*, remember our baseness and loathe our selves, and let Free-grace in all the golden links of Election, Vocation, Justification, &c. be for ever magnified by us, that the Lord should passe by his owne People the *Jewes*, and make them a People of his Curse these sixteen hundred years, and should plant us poor *Canaanites*, and accursed *Gentiles* in their stead, is no lesse an act of Mercy than of wonder, *Psal.* 2. 8. *Isa.* 54. 23. & 60. 4. 5. *Abs.* 2. 39. *Rom.* 9. 25, 26. *Ephes.* 3. 6.

Yet let us not be high-minded but fear, for if God spared not the natural branches, much lesse will he spare such wild branches as we are, if we walk in unbelief as they did, *Rom.* 11. 20, 21.

2 *Few are chosen.*

It is not all *Edom*, it is but a remnant according to the Election of Grace that shall be converted and saved. Hence the Scripture so oft calls the Elect a *Remnant*, multitudes perish,

it is but a remnant, a little remnant that are saved, *Isa. 1. 9. Joel 2. ult. Rom. 11. 5. Straight is the Gate, and narrow is the way that leads unto life, and few there be that find it, Mat. 7. 14. Christ's flock is a little little flock, Luke 12. 32. How few were saved of the Old World, Sodom, Jerusalem?*

The way to Heaven it is a difficult way, and calls for difficult things, and hard lessons which the world cannot endure to hear of, much less to practise.

1 It calls for Universal *Self-denial*, all *Self-conceit*, *Self-ends*, *Self-interest*, &c. must be renounced if we will be Christ's Disciples. Here most stick.

2 It calls for a *saving, sanctifying, working, lively faith*, and this is hard; *Presumption* is easie, but to beleieve requires the exceeding greatnesse of Gods Power to work it in us, *Ephes. 1. 19. Coloss. 2. 12.*

3 It calls for sincere Conversion, and that is an exceeding hard thing; it is no lesse than the change of Nature, it is the changing of a Lion into a Lambe, of a Wolf into a Sheep, of Fire into Water, &c.

4 There are many hard things to be *suffered* as well as to be done, many losses, crosses, tentations from the world, the Devil, and our owne corruption: all which laid together shew the difficulty of Salvation, and by consequence the paucity of such as shall be saved.

[See more at large on this Point, Mr. *Ant. Burges's* Spirit. Refining, 1 Part, Ser. 222. p. 643. and on 1 Cor. 3. 15. p. 192. *Shepherd* Sincere Convert, chap. 5. p. 92. to 117. Mr. *Watsons* Ser. on *Philip. 2. 12.* to 23. Mr. *Swinnocks* on *Philip. 1. 21.* p. 132. to 139. Mr. *Rogers* on 1 *Pet. 3. 19.* p. 511. Mr. *Sheffield* against Hypocrisie, ch. 11. p. 91. &c.]

3 *Real and sound conversion is the peculiar and proper work of God.*

If a remnant of *Edom* be called and converted, *it is the Lord that doth it.* The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, *Jer. 10. 23. It is not in him that willeth, nor in him that runneth, but in God that sheweth mercy,* *Rom. 9. 16. Noah* may speak periwatively, but it is God only that can perswade *Japhet* to dwell in the Tents of *Shem.*

See Six Observations more in *M. Hutchinsons*, in *locum.*

## VERSE 13.

*Behold, the dayes come, saith the Lord, that the Blow-man shall overtake the Reaper, and the treader of Grapes him that soweth seed, and the Mountains shall drop sweet Wine, and all the Hills shall melt.*

**M**An by nature is a very froward, peevish, perverse Peece, especially when under the crosse, God hath much adoe to fasten any comfort on us. When *Israel* lay in deep distress in Egyptian bondage, they hearkned not to *Moses* because of the anguish of their spirits, *Exod. 6. 9.* they were so oppressed with sorrow that they could not mind what *Moses* said, nor beleeve any thing that was spoken concerning their deliverance, as deeming their deliverance desperate and past hope. So this People having laine long in Babylonish Captivity: and after that tired out with many troubles, the Lord here heaps up Promise upon Promise, to assure them of better times at hand. In this Verse we have a third Promise, where the Holy Ghost by the abundance of external and corporal blessings, doth shadow forth unto us the great plenty of *Spiritual gifts*, which should be poured out in Gospel-times; yet since Piety hath the promise of the blessings of this life as well as of that to come, and temporal blessings doe oft attend the Gospel, and God hath promised, that if we first seek his Kingdom, all other things shall be cast upon us, *Matth. 6. 33.* we may take the words in the largest sense, as a promise both of Temporal and Spiritual blessings, which should be poured out upon the Church in Gospel-times.

1. Spiritual blessings are promised absolutely and primarily, they being necessary *per se*; but Temporal blessings are promised as accessories only conditionally, with exception of the Crosse, and so farre as they shall be good for us. Things necessary we are sure of, and if more may doe us good wee shall not want it.

Though both are promised here, yet *Spiritual* blessings are specially intended, as will appear by these reasons.

1. If we look into those Primitive times, when these *Spiritual* gifts here promised were poured out abundantly, the Church

Church was low in Temporals, though rich in Spirituals, they were Persecuted and Plundered of all, *Heb. 10. 34.* besides, the Gospel calls for Self-denial, and a contempt of all these low enjoyments.

2 In Old Testament times the Church was in its Childhood, and therefore *Moses* and the Prophets by such expressions did condescend to the capacity of the rude, and infirm Jewish people, which were as Children under the rudiments of the Law, and spake to them as we use to doe to our little children in their owne Language, when we make promises to them. Hence we read so frequently in the Old Testament of heavenly things shadowed forth unto us by Feasts, and other Temporal blessings, *Isa. 25. 6.* and Earthly peace typifying Spiritual peace, and plenty of Corn and Wine, plenty of Grace, as here in the text. By all those Temporal things the Lord would raise up our hearts to the contemplation of heavenly and eternal things.

In the words we have, 1. *A Blessing promised*, and that is, a glorious affluence and abundance of all things, set forth in Hyperbolical terms, and very lofty expressions. As,

- 1 The Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper.
- 2 The Treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed.
- 3 The Mountains should drop Wine.
- 4 If this be not enough, all the Hills shall melt, and dissolve into Milk, Honey, Oyl.

All figurative promises of Spiritual Graces and Blessings in Gospel-times.

2 Here is the *Time* when all this shall be effected, and that is in Gospel-times, set forth in those general terms, *The dayes shall come*, viz. when the Tabernacle of *David* shall be built, and the Kingdom of Christ be raised up.

3 Here is the confirmation of all this, *Dixit Dominus, The Lord hath said it.*

4 Here is an *Eccē*, to quicken our attention to these glorious Promises, *Behold the dayes come saith the Lord.*

So much for the Analysis, now for the explication of the terms.

*The Plow-man shall overtake the Reaper*, q. d. The Harvest shall be so great and plentiful, that before you can house

Non erit vul-  
garis & usitata  
copia, sed que  
fidem superat,  
imò etiam ordi-  
nem naturæ,  
quasi montes  
different. Cal-  
vina.

it, the Plow-man will be at your heels to prepare the ground for another crop. Such plenty there should be, that they should scarce have time enough to gather it in, for before the Harvest was in, it should be time to Plow, and the Vintage should reach unto the seed time.

And the treader of Grapes him that soweth the seed: Or draweth forth the seed, viz. out of his Sack to sow, q. d. The Vintage shall be so plentiful that it shall last even till seed time; so that when you should be sowing, you shall be gathering of grapes; yea such plenty shall there be of all things, that when one kind of fruit is ripe, another shall follow, every one in his due course and order.

A Parallel place we have, *Levit. 26. 5.* to which the Prophet seems to allude, where we have the same Blessings promised almost in expresse terms, *Your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time, q. d.* you shall have such plentiful Harvests, that before you can have threshed out your Corn, the Vintage shall come; and such rich Vintages, that before they be ended, it shall be time to sow your seed; so that you shall have one blessing in the neck of another, you shall alwayes be getting and gathering of fruit, there shall be no time wherein the earth shall not be yeelding you somewhat, either for necessity or delight.

And the Mountains shall drop sweet wine, or Must, which is newly trodden, and is called sweer, because new Wine is so. Mountains usually are hard, rocky, wild, barren places, but now they shall be so cultivated, and made so fruitful, that they shall even run wine. The Prophet seems to allude to *Judea*, which had Mountains beset with Vineyards, q. d. The Vines in the Mountains shall abound with Grapes. The like expression we have almost in *terminis*, *Joel 3. 18.* and it shall come to passe in that day, that the Mountains shall drop down new Wine, and the Hills shall flow with milk. q. d. In Gospel-times God shall give plenty of Spiritual nourishment unto his Church, so as every part thereof shall abound with the means of Salvation; for as in the text, so here, by figurative expressions is shadowed forth the blessed estate of the Church under the Kingdom of Christ; and it is usual in the Old Testament to set forth heavenly things by earthly Similitudes, as in the Book of the Canticles.

Gaude, succus  
dulcis, i. e.  
mustum Cant.  
8. 2. Isa. 49. 26.  
Joel 1. 5. Bac-  
chus amat col-  
lis.

*And all the Hills shall melt*; that is, they shall seeme to doe so, by reason of the abundant increase of Milk, Oyl, Honey, &c. as if they flowed with them. The Hills shall flow with Milk (saith *Joel*) that is, they shall so abound with Cattle, Bees, Vines, and Olives, that Milk, Honey, Wine, and Oyl, shall as it were flow from the Hills, and though they be high and hard, yet now they shall all dissolve into moylture, and be made fit for culture.

Some Allegorize thus; By *Mountains* they understand the Apostles and Apostolical men, whose Evangelical Doctrine was as Wine to comfort disconsolate souls. These plowed and sowed the world with the seed of heavenly Doctrine; and by *Hills* are meant the ordinary Preachers, who had Milk for Babes. Or, the *Mountains* are great men, and the *Hills* the inferiour sort; all these both high and low should in Gospel-times be enricht with gifts and graces. The multitudes of Converts should be so great, that they should keep the Lords Spiritual Husband-men in continual employment, so that they should alwaies be Plowing, Sowing, Reaping, &c. alwayes Praying, Preaching, Planting, &c.

The summe of all is this, *That in Gospel-times there should be such abundance of blessings, that one should overtake another in a perpetual succession; as it is in a rich and fruitful soyl, where the Harvest is no sooner in, but the Plough is put into the ground for another crop; and the Vintage is no sooner done, but the seed is sown for a new Harvest. Thus it shall be with the Church, where one blessing endeth, another shall begin, and even the driest and barrenest hearts shall yeeld excellent fruits of grace in great abundance.*

## OBSERVATIONS.

## 1 Gospel-times are blessed times.

It is the truly *Golden Age*, when all runs Milk, and Wine, and Honey, and all this without price and without money, *Isa.*

55. 1, 2. *Of Christs fulness we all receive grace for grace;* John See Mr. Obad. Sedgwick on  
1. 16. The weak are now made strong, the barren fruitful, *Isa.* 55. 1, 2.  
the Hills are levelled, the Vallies enricht, the Evangelical Plough makes all mellow and fruitful, and fit for Christ.

We should therefore blesse the Lord, who hath cast our



O Fortunatos  
numinum, &c.

Lots in this pleasant time of Spiritual riches, peace, joy, and abundant consolation. Happy we, if in this our day we know the things that concern our everlasting peace, before they be hid from our eyes. How great then is the folly of those that separate themselves, and forsake those fountains and mountains of Wine and living water, and goe to stinking Ponds and broken Cisterns of mens inventions, that can yeeld them no comfort or refreshing in troublous times.

2 *Piety brings plenty.*

When men first seek Gods Kingdom (as in Gospel-times, it is prophesied they should doe, *Isa. 2. 2, 3.*) then Wine, and Milk, and Honey, and all other temporal blessings of peace and plenty shall be given in with the Gospel of Peace. The Gospel comes not empty handed, especially to an obedient people; as we see in *Constantines* dayes, and in *Q. Elizabeths* dayes, when the Gospel flourisht, the Nation flourisht with all temporal abundance. Piety hath the promises, and that veru-ally is every thing. If we be obedient, we shall eate the good of the Land, *Levit. 26. 3, 5. Isa. 1. 19. Hos. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.*

See more in my  
*Beauty of Holiness*, ch. 7. obj.  
1. and Mr. Sec-  
ker his Non-  
such Professor,  
p. 269, &c.

VERSE 14.

*And I will bring againe the Captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste Cities, and inhabit them, and they shall plant Vineyards, and drink the Wine thereof, they shall also make Gardens, and eate the fruit of them.*

THE Prophet having fore-told this People of their misery, how their Cities should be ransackt, their Land laid wast, the inhabitants captivated and slaine, comes now to comfort the remnant, multiplying words, and adding Promise to Promise, assuring them of comfort in the end; though the body of the People never returned out of the *Assyrian* Captivity, yet the elect remnant should be brought out of this misery into an estate of joy and felicity.

To the former Promises the Prophet here addes a fourth, which brancheth it selfe into four particulars.

1 They

1 They shall be delivered from Captivity and Banishment, *I will bring again the Captivity of my people.* There is a Paronomasy in the words which cannot be translated without loss; such elegancies are frequent, as I have shewed before.

*Veſtabi erh-  
ſhebuth, &  
convertam cap-  
tivitatem.*

This Promise was fulfilled when the Meſſias came, and delivered them from their Spiritual captivity to Sin and Satan, and brought them into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God.

And here the *Jewes* and their followers are our again, taking these Promises *Literally*, which are especially to be understood *Spiritually*, Myſtically, and Metaphorically. For this returning here is an Evangelical returning to Chriſt, when the remnant of the Elect both of *Judah* and *Israel* should be converted, which though it be very sparingly now, yet in Apostolical times they had many Jewish Converts, we read of about three thousand of the Houſe of *Israel* converted at one Sermon, *Acts* 2. 36, 37, 41. inſomuch that St. James writes a whole Epistle to the diſperſed *Jewes*, and *Peter* writes two.

2 They should have Peace, with ſweet ſecurity and plenty of all things, which appears by the fruites and effects of it.

As 1. Plantation,

They should build Cities,

Plant Vine-yards.

Make Gardens.

2 They should have fruition of all these,

They should inhabit their Cities,

Drink the Wine of their Vine-yards,

And eat the fruit of their Gardens.

The like Promise we have, *Iſa.* 65. 21, 22. *My Servants shall build Houses and inhabit them, and plant Vine-yards, and eat the fruit of them;* that is, they should peaceably enjoy the blessings of God, where still under Temporal blessings are shadowed forth Spiritual and eternal ones. As when God was angry with the *Jewes*, he used to terrifie them with legal Curses, as before, *Amos* 5. 11. *They should build houses and not dwell in them, plant Vine-yards, but not eat the fruit of them.* So on the contrary here he promiſeth, that they should not labour in vaine, as they did before when they served Idols, and

and provoked him with their inventions. Speaking to the *Jewes*, he tells them still of Legal Blessings, which typified Evangelical and Spiritual mercies, as was usual with the Prophets for to doe, as Mr. *Burroughs* shewes at large on *Hos. 1. 11. Left. 7. p. 183, &c.* his only fault there is, that he inclines too much to that fancy of the *Millenaries*, as Mr. *Bailly* shewes, in his *Disswaive from the Errours of the Times*, p. 224, &c.

*Verè ubi deservitas instaurant, qui cultum verum restituunt, & Ecclesias instaurant. Mercer in locum, ubi plura.*

And they shall build wast Cities; that is, they shall restore the pure Worship of God, and build up the Elect in their most holy faith.

*Horti & Vineæ sunt Ecclesiæ Dei. Idem.*

*Omnia sunt spiritualiter accipienda. Idem.*

How grossly then doth Dr. *Homes* abuse his Reader, that cites *Mercer* here for a Corporal reign.

They shall plant Vine-yards and Gardens; that is, particular Churches, in which God delights to walk, and feed on the grapes of obedience which grow there. And drink the Wine thereof; that is, they shall have comfort in their labours, which they should see were not in vaine in the Lord. The Church is Gods Husbandry, and the Apostles with their Successors are Gods Husband-men and Vinitors, that must plant Churches and water them, and as much as in them lyes, propagate them all the world over, that Christs truth may be known upon earth: and his saving health among all Nations. So that this verse is a continued Metaphor taken from such as returned out of Captivity into their owne Country, for such are wont to build Cities, plant Vine-yards, make Gardens, &c. now the rule must still be remembred, that by these are set forth Spiritual blessings.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1 When God is at peace with a People, then peace, plenty, prosperity internal, and external follow.

When Gods face shines upon a People, then there is a new face set upon things; and those that frowned before, now smile on us, *Gen. 32. 28. Hos. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.* when God is at peace with us, he makes all at peace with us, *2 Chron. 15. 15. & 17. 7. to 12. Psal. 81. 12, 13, 14. Prov. 16. 7. Acts 9. 31.*

2 Christ

2. *Chriſt hath redeemed his Elect from the Tyranny of ſin and Satan, and all the enemies of their ſalvation, Luk. 1. 74. Col. 1. 13. and 2. 14. Heb. 2. 14, 15.*

He that brought back the Captivity of his people here, hath lead Captivity Captive, and hath received gifts for men, even for the Rebellious, *Pſal. 68. 18.*

See Dr. Boltons  
Bounds of Li-  
berry, and Mr.  
*Burroughs*  
Saints Treasu-  
ry, on John 8.  
36. p. 87, 88,  
&c.

## VERSE 15.

*And I will plant them upon their Land, and they ſhall no more be pulled up, out of their Land, which I have given them, ſaith the Lord.*

**W**EE are now come to the fifth and laſt Promise, which brancheth it ſelf into two particulars. 1. A Promise of Plantation and Settlement. *I will Plant them in their own Land.* They ſhall have a ſettled and ſure habitation in the Church Militant here, and in the Church Triumphant hereafter.

2. They ſhall have eſtabliſhment, *They ſhall be no more pulled up out of their Land.* This cannot be underſtood literally, for the Jews did not abide in their own Land for ever. 1. Before Chriſts time, when they returned out of *Babylon*, 'twas but a ſmall number that returned to their own Land, and thoſe abode not long there neither. 2. They were ſo far from ruling over all Nations, that they were tributary to them. 3. Their bounds were much ſtraitned. 4. When the Jews ſhall be called, yet I think no ſober man will ſay, they ſhall no more be pulled up out of their own Land, but ſhall abide there for ever, as the letter of the Text imports. I know that *for ever*, is oft in Scripture put for an age, or for a long time; but the Mil- lenaries take it here in the letter, at leaſt for their thouſand years reign, but without any ground.

But take the words ſpiritually, as alluding to Chriſts King- dome, in Goſpel-times, and then all theſe Promiſes are abundantly fulfilled, though not *ſpecifically*, in the ſame kind, yet *Valore*, in ſpirituals, which are of far greater value than if they had been Lords of the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*; beſides the bounds of the Church are very much enlarged by the Goſpel.

So that I ſhall (with the beſt Divines) take the words in a ſpiritual ſenſe, for the perseverance of the Saints; ſuch as are

true Members of Christs Church shall never fall away, none shall pull them from Christ, or separate them from his love. Christ will so settle his Church upon earth, that it shall never be rooted up by the violence of men, nor be prevailed against by the gates of Hell.

3. Here is the confirmation of all this, *saith the Lord thy God*. He is *Thy God* in Covenant, reconciled to thee in Christ, ready to give thee all things needful for life and godliness. 'Tis he that hath promised, who cannot lye, nor deceive, and therefore thou mayest safely build upon his word.

## OBSERVATIONS.

1. *The Elect shall never totally and finally perish.*

Christ will build his Church, and if he be the builder, who shall hinder him? *Mat. 16. 18. and 24. 24.* The Elect are Trees well rooted, the planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified in them, *Isa. 61. 3.* Though they may fall foully, yet never finally; they were never real Saints that fall away totally and finally. Such as go out from us, were never truly of us. They that are truly ingrafted into Christ, no enemies visible or invisible shall ever prevail against them.

*Ecclesia concu-  
si potest, expug-  
nari non potest.*

*In my Thesis de  
perseverantia  
sanctorum.*

'Tis true, the Potentates and Tyrants of the world, have been in all ages heaving at this Stone, but it hath crushed them all to peeces, *Zach. 12. 3.* Christ hath alwaies had a Church, a little Flock, a Remnant to serve him, and ever will have in despite of all opposition. As I have shewed at large elsewhere.

2. *God will faithfully perform what ever he hath promised to his people.*

As all the Threatnings shall certainly fall on the heads of the wicked; so all the Promises shall first or last be made good to the righteous. 'Tis God who cannot lye, that hath said it, and therefore he will certainly do it.



## *Homesius denuo enervatus.*

**D**R. *Homes*, *Chiliasiarum ille Achilles*, that Sword and Buckler, that great *Millenarian* Champion, which hath printed a whole Book in folio of ten shillings price (to my cost I speak it, for I never paid so dear for so much waste-paper, and a great nothing in a Jugling-box) in defence of that fancy. Amongst one and fifty Proofs taken out of the Old Testament for the confirmation of his Tener, hee produceth this of *Amos*, 9. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. for one; you see how directly he comes in my way, otherwise I had not stirred one step, nor indeavoured in the least any confutation of the Doctors Folio, which doth sufficiently shew its own folly without a Confuter; 'Tis like a Puppet stuf with Bumbaste, in which there is neither life nor spirit. I have read of one that wrote a whole Sheet in the praise of a Louse; that indeed is an *Ens*, a living creature: But I never read nor heard of any that ever spent so many Sheets in Folio about this fancy and *Chimera Chimarrissima* before. What *Luther* said of the Monks, is true of the Millenaries. *Sicut Monastica religio nihil videt in Scripturis nisi cucullos: Ita Millenarius nihil videt in Scripturis nisi Phantasias.* Corrupt heads, and corrupt hearts pick corrupt notions, and impure senses out of the pure word of God. Many in our daies, instead of solid food; do fill and feed themselves with golden dreams, and so resemble him that made the golden Legend, who is said to be a man *Plumbei vis, ferrei cordis, auri frontis.* 'Tis said of the Popish Priests, that they plead stoutly for Extreame Unction, *Ut ipsi evadant Meliores*, that they may the better lick their own fingers. I hope the Doctor had no aspiring thoughts, when he writ those High-flown notions; but when I shall have shewed you how unlike Dr. *Homes* in 1651. was to Dr. *Homes* in 1641. we may well say there was somewhat of self at the bottome.

Quest. But what doth Dr. *Homes* think of such men?

Eee 2

Answ.

—Tandem fit  
sarcinus arbor.

Some men have their guts in their heads, and their brains in their bellies. *Portentorum vidum gerunt in capite.* I may say, of this Dr. as one saies of a finical empty Lawyer, he is *homo in causis agendis bene Vestitus.*



A. He tells you in the year 1641. That for a man deliberately, and to please a Party, to wrest the sacred Word of God, is indirect blasphemy; and St. Austin calls it *Herese, Hæreticus est*, August. de utriusque alicujus temporalis commodi causa, & maxime gloria & lit. credendi. c. 7 principatius, falsas opiniones aut gignit aut sequitur. I doubt we have too many such Augustinian Hereticks still.

This of the Man, let us now to the Matter.

See my Tract  
against the  
Millen. p. 4 &c

This text in *Amos* (saith Dr. Homes) will prove (for to that end he cites it) that all the Saints departed shall rise and reign with Christ a thousand years here upon earth, in a wonderful, visible, spiritual, glorious manner, drinking Wine, and enjoying the Quintessence of the Creatures, &c. Now how this text should prove such a Teneer, I must confess my dimme eyes cannot discern. But the Doctor, who can see as farre into a Millstone as another man, will clear it up. But first, lest we should think the Doctor to be singular in this opinion, he tells you, that the great Mercer, and judicious Calvin on the place, concur with him (in the main at least) in this point; which how true (besides what I have already produced before in the Commentary) I come now to examine.

V. Calvin in Amos 9. ult.

For Mercer on the place, of all Commentators, I find him most inclining, yea peremptory for a Spiritual sense in all these five Verses. How oft doth he cry, *Hæc non ad literam, non ad literam, sed Spiritualiter, spiritualiter, spiritualiter sunt accipienda*? Where is now the Doctors corporal, pleasant, external reigning? By his abusing this learned Author we may guess at the rest, for no better doth he deal with Calvin. Hear how expressly he speaks against the Doctors opinion, *Quod hic dicitur de tritici et vini abundantia, debet exponi pro natura regni Christi; ergo quia spirituale est regnum Christi, sufficiat etiam nobis affluere spiritualibus bonis: Et Judei, quos Dominus sibi residuos reservavit, contenti fuerunt illâ spirituali abundantia. Siquis obijciat Prophetam hic non Allegorice loqui, responsio facilis est; nempe hunc morem passim receptum esse in Scriptura, ut felicitas sub commodis presentis vite, & terrenis benedictionibus quasi pingatur ante oculos nostros: præsertim hoc observare in Prophetis licet, quia stylum accommodabant ad captum rudis & infirmi populi.*

See Dr. Homes  
for the Millen,  
p. 312 fol.

What could be spoken more (from this text) against the Doctors opinion, and yet the Doctor still tells us, that he mainly contends for a literal sense, and for a Corporal bringing back of  
the

the ten Tribes into their own country. But a greater than Doctor *Homes* is of another judgement, it is the learned Doctor *Rivet*, *V. Rivet*, in glossing on *Amos* 9. 13. thus he saith, *Harum promissionum minima pars ad temporalia referri debet, ut ex iis assurgamus ad spiritualia; & pleraque etiam non impleri perfecte in hac vita te-* Hof. 2. 21. p. 567.  
*neamus, sed caelestem beatitudinem respicere, quomodo, quando excellentius est quod promittitur regni Christi civibus praestandum, quam unquam temporaliter fuit praestitum, necessarium est ut de bonis spiritualibus accipiantur per Christum donandis, &c. ubi p/nra.*

But to put all out of controversy, St. *James* citing *Amos* 9. 11, 12. interprets them Spiritually, and proves the calling and conversion of the *Gentiles* in the Apostolical times from them (as I have shewed before) *Acts* 15. 7. to 17. now whether shall we beleave the Apostle *James* that interprets these words Spiritually, or Doctor *Homes* who mainly contends for a literal sense?

2 *Dato non concesso*, giving but not granting what the Doctor saith, suppose all these promises were to be taken literally, for temporal blessings, yet how doth it follow hence that Christ shall reign with the Saints on earth in a visible manner a thousand years? Let any one read over all these five Verses, and put to any one of them singly, or to all conjunctly, ergo Christ shall reign with the Saints a thousand years here on earth, and see if he can forbear smiling at such gross *Non-sequiturs*, which agree like Harp and Harrow.

Lastly, the Doctor in the close of all challengeth all the Men, and Books in the World, to shew when ever these promises were yet fulfilled? *When* (saith this self-conceited Doctor) *were all the wast Cities re-built, the breaches made up, when was there ever yet all spiritual, and all outward prosperity in the Church? When did the Mountains ever run Wine, or the Hills ever melt into Oyl, and Milk, and Honey, and when were all these enjoyments perpetuated?*

*Ans.* If you take the Promises Spiritually, St. *James* hath told us they were fulfilled in the Apostles dayes; if you take them literally they never were, nor ever will be fulfilled; who ever looks for a sinless, sorrowless, deathless condition, (as the Doctor dreams of) in this world, when the Mountains shall run Wine, &c. none but grosse Fanaticks will

fancy such fables. I am even tired with mentioning them.

Obj. But if this text in Amos will not prove the point, yet the Doctor hath one prime place which will prove it terminis terminibus, and that is Revel. 20. 4, 5, 6.

Ans<sup>r</sup>. Doctor *Homes* shall confute Doctor *Homes*, Doctor *Nathaniel Homes*, 1641. shall confute dreaming Dr. *Homes*, 1651. the greatest Antimillenarian could hardly say more against them than he did then, when the opinion was not in fashion. But he may say as a loose Bishop did sometimes,

*Nunc aliud tempus, alii pro tempore mores.*

But hear what he sayes (in his Ser. on 2 Pet. 3. 13. p. 4, to 7. preach't before the Parliament, 1641. where he strongly asserts the excellency of the Presbyterian Government, p. 29. 38, &c. I mention this only, lest he should face about again, but I think his *Rump* -- is broken, &c.) *Our Divines* (saith he) commonly called *Millenaries*, would understand this text of Peter, of the *Martyrs* reigning a thousand years on earth, before they be taken up soul and body into heaven; but these are as wide as earth from Heaven. Of innumerable particulars which might be alleadged, let us at this time be content with some touches on that leading place, *Revel. 20. 4, &c. 1.* The text tells us (saith he) that it is their *Souls* shall reign, and not their Bodies, and by a thousand years is meant an eternity of felicity and reigning in heaven. Then he cites *Pareus* on *Rev. 20.* against them, and perswades his Reader to read that Learned man on that point. Then he takes off their objections, and at last tells us, that *Papias* the first Author of this opinion was a credulous man, and apt to receive fables for verities; I wish D. H. were not too like him. You see by this time what little credence is to be given to this Weather-cock, that can turn, and turn, but never crows.

But what talk I of D. H. when I find learned Sir *Henry Vane* (in eadem heresi) in his vain peece of Learned Nonsense to favour this opinion, I may say of that Cloudy Book with better reason what one said of *Persius*, *Si non vis intelligi, debes negligi*. Truth loves not clouds and corners, it is error that is *lucifugus* and fears the light.

*Cyprian. Praef. advers. Judaeos*

I shall be brief, remembering that of *Cyprian*, *Brevitas controuersiarum*

He pleads for Geneva and Scotland, saying, *Omne bonum ab Aquilone.*

Yet now himself is in this heavenly wide number.

*Ensch. Hist. 1.3. cap. 35.*

troverſarum legentibus plurimum prodeſt, dum non intellectum legentis, & ſeiſum liber longior ſpargit; ſed ſubtili ore compendio (id quod legitur) tenax memoria cuſtodit.

Sir Henry Vane, in his *Mystery of Godlineſſe*, ch. 25. tells us, that when this thouſand years are come, Magiſtracy, and Viſible Worſhip, and forms of Chriſtian Religion, &c. ſhall be deſtroyed, &c. Thoſe places which point expreſly at the Day of Judgement, he wracks and wreſts to prove his thouſand years reign, as *Acts* 3. 19, 20, 21. & 17. 31. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. & 1 *Cor.* 6. 2, 3.

Good news for  
Libertines.

Q. But when doth Sir Henry ſay that this thouſand years reign ſhall begin?

A. So far as I can gather from him, this thouſand years reign of Chriſt on earth ſhall begin in the ſeventh thouſand year of the world, viz. about 440. years hence. Wiſely done S. H. to ſet a longer time than moſt of this way doe, that ſo he may not be laughed at for his vain calculation whilt he liveth.

But that I may not wrong him (for he hath wronged himſelf too much already) take his own words, ch. 26 p. 418, 428. *The General aſſembly of the fiſt born are to continue and abide for a thouſand years in the exerciſe of this immortal, incorruptible, bodily life here in this world, keeping the true Sabbath of reſt unto the Lord, in that ſeventh part of the time of the worlds duration. All worldly ſtrength, w<sup>th</sup> ſome power, ſhall then as the walls of Jericho, fall flat before Jeſus the true Joshua, and theſe true Iſraelites, as having been by them compaſſed about ſix dayes, and now on the ſeventh a thouſand years being with the Lord as one day, 2 *Pet.* 3. 8 making way for the end mentioned, 1 *Cor.* 15. 24. ſo that now men may know when the Day of Judgement ſhall be, viz. about four hundred and forty years hence.*

See all this  
ſolly confuted  
in my Tract a-  
gainſt the Mil-  
lenaries.

But how doth Sir H. prove all theſe high-flown Notions? why ipſe dixit, he that never erred ſayes it, witneſs our ſelf at W.

It will be the wiſdome of thoſe in authority, ſpeedily to ſuppreſs ſuch real Fanatical opinions; elſe *Ha nuga ſeria fient*. Theſe trifles may become troubles.

If any ſhall take offence at my plaineneſs againſt theſe looſe Principles, I ſhall anſwer with Bernard, *Malo in me mormur hominum quam in Deum, bonum eſt mihi, ſi Deus me utatur pro clypeo.*

FINIS.



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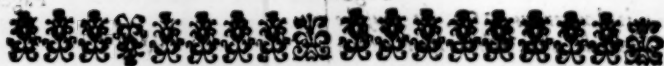
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